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ABSTRACT

The transformation of an entire institution is documented. Austin College in Austin, Texas underwent a total institutional renewal program during the 1970s that included new approaches to curriculum and innovations in programs for the entering student, faculty development, governance and operational systems and constituency relations. Each of these areas is the subject of a chapter in the book. Each chapter identifies problems in the area confronting Austin College, describes programs the college used to meet those problems and highlights principles emerging from the Austin College experience. After enunciating five principles of institutional change, the author offers suggestions on redefining student/teacher relationships, reshaping traditional curricula, encouraging faculty renewal programs, revamping governance and operations systems and establishing new dimensions in constituency relations. A summary chapter articulates general principles of institutional self-renewal programs that other institutions may wish to follow. (DC)

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Wholeness and Renewal in Education

A Learning Experience at Austin College

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DeWitt C. Reddick

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Wholeness and Renewal in Education

A Learning Experience at Austin College

by
DeWitt C. Reddick
Professor Emeritus of Journalism and Education
The University of Texas at Austin
And holder of the Ida M. and Cecil H. Green Chair
of Creative Education Leadership
at Austin College September 1976
to August 1978

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Preface

For a number of years, while on the faculty of The University of Texas, I served also as a trustee of Austin College in Sherman, Texas. As trustee, I became aware of the challenges confronting the small private liberal arts colleges in the changing society of the post World War II years. Also, I was privileged to witness at first hand how Austin College, under the astute leadership of John D. Moseley as president, perceived oncoming challenges before they became critical then devised academic solutions that were both creative and practical. Thus the influence of Austin College became widespread, pioneering the way for the church-related colleges and other private colleges.

At the time of my retirement from The University of Texas and from the active trusteeship at Austin College, I accepted appointment, one-third time, as holder of the newly created Ida and Cecil Green Chair of Creative Leadership at Austin College. Thus I was afforded the opportunity for two years to participate in the final stages of Austin College's "total renewal" and to help with the evaluation of its pattern for continuous renewal.

In a half-century of work with higher education, I have encountered no other educational adventures as exciting and as promising as those unfolded at Austin College. The experiences at this college need to be shared with educators in other institutions; and this book has been prepared for that purpose.

This book in every sense of the word is a team effort, not the product of one writer. Various task forces and committees of the Austin College faculty have prepared reports and evaluations from which materials have been freely drawn. Segments of the book manuscript have been reviewed by administrators and faculty who were involved in the processes described; and suggestions from these reviewers have been invaluable. Therefore, I acknowledge this indebtedness to all of the faculty and administrative officials of the College. Among these, particular acknowledgement must be given to Dr. Gerald Hinkle for permission to use

material from his carefully prepared evaluative report of the Austin College venture; to Dr. Harry Smith (new incoming president of the College) for his incisive injections of national perspectives; and to key administrators Dan Bedsole, Howard Starr, and Scott Buchanan for their factual contributions and their careful editing. Helpful suggestions came also from outside the College. J. B. Hefferlin of the Jossey-Bass Publishing Company provided guidance in setting the objectives and approaches for the manuscript. Arthur C. Frantzreb, consultant in institutional management, aided in the evaluation and planning processes. On the College staff Laura Myers and Katy Ollett typed various versions of the manuscript.

Two persons participated in the step-by-step preparation of the book from the inception of the idea to the finished manuscript. They entered into the process so thoroughly and effectively that I would like for them to share fully the credit for producing the book. Dr. Moseley through his imaginative yet practical leadership was the focal person in shaping Austin College's total renewal; therefore, his constant input into the writing of this book guided the selection of materials and the emphasis on educational principles. The other person who deserves much credit for the book is Miss Suzanne Starnes. An Austin College graduate, Miss Starnes as a free-lance writer was brought back to the College at intervals over a period of years to write reports on various enterprises. She brought to the preparation of the book the insights of her students days and the understandings which emerged from her work with the reports. Her writing skill proved most helpful, too, in the processes of editing and rewriting.

The challenges faced by Austin College are those confronting most institutions of higher education. It is to be hoped, therefore, that an account of the innovative processes of renewal developed at Austin College will prove stimulating and helpful to leaders in other colleges.

DeWitt C. Reddick
February, 1979

Overview

An Institutional Quest for Educational Wholeness

Throughout the 1970's Austin College made a series of changes culminating in the transformation of the entire institution. *Wholeness and Renewal in Education* describes that transformation.

The transformation has been total. Not only are there new approaches to the curriculum, but there are also innovations in programs for the entering student, faculty development, governance and operational systems, and constituency relations. Each of these areas is the subject of a chapter in this book. Each chapter identifies problems in the area confronting Austin College, describes programs the College is using to meet those problems, and highlights principles emerging from the Austin College experience. Problems within each area still confronting the College are also noted. The attempt in this volume is to lift up the significant features of renewal, to rise above the details and state what has been done and why.

Many colleges and universities are engaged in some of the programs and activities pointed to in this book. Some have highly flexible and individualized educational programs. Others have concentrated more in the governance and management area, incorporating advanced business techniques into educational practices. Still others are using "growth contracts" and similar techniques to spur faculty development. Few, however,

have moved aggressively, systematically, consistently and simultaneously in all areas important in the life of an institution. Yet this comprehensive approach is one Austin College has taken and the one described in the following pages. This book deals with the whole, with all major parts that must be coordinated and shaped into a meaningful and coherent thrust for an institution.

One assumption is that *the way the pieces fit together is as important as the individual pieces themselves*. Programs for students, programs for faculty, governance and management structures, constituency efforts — all have to be considered in relation to each other and to the institution's mission and role. A related assumption is that this holistic approach yields greater effectiveness for each of the individual programs and activities and for the entire institution — in essence, *the whole is greater than the sum of the parts*.

Preliminary plans for this book envisioned a step-by-step accounting of the methods used in bringing about needed transformation. It soon became evident, however, that situations in each college would differ in some ways from those present in Austin College and that each college in such an undertaking would have to evolve methods pertinent to the local situation. Therefore, this book has concentrated on depicting the forces that demand change, indicating the goals of the Austin College effort, describing the changes that resulted, and detailing primarily those methods of implementation that reasonably may be utilized on other campuses. Any educator who seeks a more detailed accounting of the step by step procedures used at Austin College may write for an earlier companion volume, *Changing Tasks and Roles in Higher Education*. This report tells the evolutionary story of curricular development over the basic four-year period, 1972-1976, a development undertaken with support from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the National Science Foundation. Also, the College is prepared to furnish more detailed information upon request, concerning any division of the renewal effort described in this book.

The holistic approach to renewal undertaken by Austin College brought dramatic changes in the institution. These

changes were noted by many visitors to the campus — consultants invited by the faculty and administrators, reviewers from outside agencies and foundations which have generously provided financial support for various projects, guest speakers, and others. After seeing the College and its programs first-hand, many of these visitors have left the same message with their hosts: "Tell your story to others; share it so they can benefit from your experience."

Like any changing institution, Austin College also faces the need to keep its own constituency informed of recent developments. Rapid and extensive change must be supported by understanding on the part of the constituency.

Communicating what has happened, however, is no easy matter. Moreover, there is precious little time to commit to "telling the story" rather than "doing it," which must of necessity take priority.

Two good friends of Austin College, and indeed of all higher education, have provided the means for getting at this communication task. In the mid 1970's Cecil and Ida Green established at Austin College a Chair for Creative Educational Leadership. It enables Austin College to invite distinguished scholars in higher education to visit the campus for extended periods of time, or to provide a College faculty or staff member with extra time and resources to pursue a particular project in depth.

In 1976 DeWitt C. Reddick was named to occupy the chair for two years, and he began the task of communication by taking the leadership in preparing this book. A nationally known authority in the field of journalism and former dean of the School of Communication at The University of Texas at Austin, Dr. Reddick is a natural choice to help tell this story. Moreover, he is a Senior Trustee of Austin College, having served 12 years on the Board of Trustees. His unique combination of experience in higher education, expertise in communications, and knowledge of Austin College makes him well qualified for this task. He was assisted in research and writing by Ms. Suzanne Starnes who, as a former student, experienced much of the experimental work of the College and later, as a staff person and writer, helped the College develop

much of its procedural and policy material.

Those who desire additional information about Austin College or any of its programs are encouraged to contact either President Harry E. Smith or the Center for Program and Institutional Renewal at Austin College, Sherman, Texas 75090 (214-892-9101). Conversations with faculty members directly involved in a particular area can be arranged, as well as campus visits for more extensive examination of programs and activities. The members of the Austin College community stand ready to share their experience.

John D. Moseley, Chancellor
Austin College
Spring, 1979

Chapter I

The Austin College Approach to Renewal

As the 1970's slip backward into the past, institutions of higher education face many harsh realities which, for some institutions, may threaten survival. The crunch between remorseless inflation and the "taxpayers' revolt" against mounting assessments diminishes the institution's ability to meet its financial obligations, having a detrimental effect on both independent and state-sponsored education. Over-compensation for the enrollment boom of the 1960's has caught the older colleges and universities in a second squeeze — the struggle for enrollment, with the decline in size of the potential college-age student pool on the one hand and the yawning classrooms of the newly created community colleges and the newly enlarged public universities on the other.

How adequately an institution of higher education survives such current challenges may well depend upon how sensitively institutional leaders recognize and respond to the causes of campus tensions of the 1960's. It would be a mistake to charge all of these tensions to the Viet Nam War. The war served merely as a catalyst to bring to the surface the mounting disillusionment with higher education's role in a turbulent, changing society. Continuing today, that disillusionment can be dealt with adequately only if its roots of the 1960's are understood.

Feelings of frustration played an important part in causing student protest marches and the taking over of college administrative offices or buildings. Youth of the 1960's, facing compulsory service in a war that many felt unnecessary, confronted a society filled with overwhelming problems, tense controversies, and an educational system which, in the minds of many, seemed irrelevant to those problems. Loss of confidence in governmental leaders transferred easily into suspicion of all the "establishment," including college administrators. Justified insistence of ethnic minorities for equal treatment divided society and heightened a sense of conflict between generations. Perhaps most detrimental to college leaders was a deepening public distrust of higher education as a pathway to the solution of society's problems.

Uncertainty and self-doubt seeped into higher education during these disturbances, marking 1968-70 as a watershed period in the evolution of post-war colleges and universities. Articles appearing in the educational journals for this period testified to this self-doubt. *Educational Index* listed such titles as:

"End of an Era"
"Higher Education: Dilemma, Analysis, and Prospect"
"Are We Doing Our Best?"
"Collision Course for Higher Education"
"Are College Students a Defrauded Majority?"
"Education's Disgrace"
"Servants to the Great God Research"
"Is Higher Education Relevant?"
"Faculty Is Dead"
"University as an Anachronism"

What was happening? How could and should higher education respond to the challenges? More specifically, how could and should any one college or university respond? A natural response to such negative attitudes would be to add a few courses and tamper slightly with the curriculum. But undoubtedly something far deeper must be accomplished; and this growing conviction led Austin College trustees, administrators, faculty, staff, and students over a period of time to the realization that something much different must be attempted.

Austin College is a liberal arts college with an enrollment ceiling of 1200 students, located in Sherman, Texas. This institution undertook a process of change which began with preliminary experiments, evolved into extended discussions, and culminated in total transformation. The process proved disturbing, exhausting, meeting with failures and half-successes as well as with achievements, but also at times exhilarating and fulfilling. Throughout it all, the goal was to achieve significant change that would get to the root of problems. In retrospect, five principles can be discerned, principles that guided Austin College toward renewal and that are perhaps most relevant for the small liberal arts college.

Five Principles for Institutional Change

1. *The nature of society is changing, the system of higher education is changing, and these in turn mean that the tasks and roles of faculty, students, and institutions must change.*

Note, for example, one societal change which has impacted significantly upon every college — the "knowledge explosion," the ceaseless and mounting outpouring of new information about almost every aspect of environment, life, and activity. Since the end of World War II the machinery of information gathering and communication has multiplied many times the knowledge available for human consumption. For example, some authorities say that only 10% of what a person will need to know 10 years from now is known today. Professions attempt to meet the challenge by requiring continuing education for the renewal of professional licenses. But society is changing in so many aspects one cannot stay abreast of all the new developments. Scientific progress, increasingly sophisticated technology, communication advances, and many other factors are involved. The cliche that change is the only permanent part of late twentieth century life seems to be true.

Another factor which demanded readjustments in higher education was the post-war boom in college enrollment,

bringing about a change in the composition of the student body and, for a time, the hasty creation of new colleges. Related has been a change in policy. In what must be considered a phenomenally short period of time, the United States has moved from a system of mass (larger numbers) higher education to the current emphasis on universal (everyone) postsecondary education. Students with differing educational cultural backgrounds, capacities, and educational objectives now mingle in classrooms. In essence, colleges and universities have a new student clientele, including greater numbers of students from minorities and older students. Many young persons today seek entrance to college who, in previous decades, would not have considered college education essential. They come in large numbers from families in which they are the first to venture beyond high school and often the first to go beyond elementary grades. Their backgrounds escape the middle class, Anglo-Saxon background, including offspring of poverty-level families and various ethnic groups with lingering English language problems. Federal grants for work with handicapped youth at elementary and secondary levels are propelling more of these specially marked students into college.

Thus, Austin College leaders saw both the society and the system of higher education changing, and they saw a corresponding need for the roles of faculty, students, and institution to change appropriately. What, though, should be the nature of that change?

2. *The first focus of change must be on students and learning.*

Changing tasks and roles at Austin College comprise the heart of this principle. The continuing knowledge explosion demands that students learn not just a specific body of knowledge but also learn *how to learn* so that they can keep abreast of developments after leaving the campus. Moreover, with needs now varying more widely among individuals, students must learn to select from a multitude of possibilities the ones which best meet their particular needs. Thus students must move into more active roles in the educational process

and assume greater responsibility for decisions about educational choices.

To complement student role change, faculty members must shift roles to be guides and advisers rather than just authorities. While attention must continue to be directed toward teaching methods, a greater emphasis must be placed on methods of learning. Students must appreciate the need for lifelong learning, and they must have the opportunity to acquire skills and techniques of lifelong learning.

To support both student and faculty role changes, the institution must also adjust. Changes are generally credited with being, in the long run, for the benefit of better education for the students. Too often, though, this reasoning is neither fully understood nor fully implemented. Institutional structures sometimes place obstacles in the way of focusing on students and learning. One way of avoiding this pitfall is to develop principles, programs, and procedures that seem best for the students, and only then consider how to adjust institutional and faculty roles to support the student-centered approaches. That approach is the one Austin College chose.

3. *Effective educational change requires total institutional renewal.*

If the focus on students and learning is to be taken seriously, then widespread change is essential throughout the whole educational program, not in merely one or two new approaches. Other parts of the institution also have to change to be consistent with and supportive of the educational change. Nothing less than total institutional renewal is required.

But what exactly is "total institutional renewal?" At Austin College it certainly includes all aspects of the educational program, but it also encompasses even more. For total institutional renewal aimed at focusing on students and learning, the starting point is dealing directly and humanely with entering students and their needs, goals, and motivations. Renewal must address education inside and outside the classroom — it must face the entire contemporary life of students. (This topic is covered in Chapter II.) Curriculum,

obviously, must undergo sharp scrutiny, noting relevance of content to student needs, adaptation of approach to the entering level of individual student attainment, and alternative degree approaches to serve different student interests (Chapter III). To change that curriculum, however, the institution also must address the needs of faculty, a most significant factor in shaping renewal (Chapter IV). The flow of authority within the college, the exercise of legislative and judicial functions, and the whole process of program operations must be in tune with the educational changes, for without consistent approaches here the other efforts can be rendered ineffective (Chapter V). Finally, new approaches in relationships with constituencies are mandated because constituencies serve as vital connecting links between the institution and its larger context (Chapter VI).

The mere suggestion of total institutional renewal could have aroused images of a task too comprehensive and too complicated for Austin College, or any institution, to undertake. The challenge appeared more feasible, however, with the establishment of a proper framework in which to proceed.

4. *To establish a proper framework for total institutional renewal, a college should take the important first step of identifying clearly the purposes of the educational institution and defining the constituency which it serves.*

Some institutions unwittingly move away from their historic roles and constituencies, while other institutions so revise their programs in order to meet new pressures that they actually change the institution's character without realizing it. Knowledge and understanding about purposes and constituency, however, can provide the needed framework which insures that efforts are channeled in common directions and are consistent with a college's heritage and goals.

Austin College for years had formulated a statement of purposes, but the need to re-examine those purposes did not emerge until the total institutional renewal was already underway. Although the College for the most part had the necessary framework in place at the beginning of the renewal effort, it had to revise and update that framework during the

process, covering a period of four to six years.

On the surface it may seem simple to formulate a few generalities about helping young people to become better educated, to become good citizens, to develop value commitments, and to prepare themselves for careers. But experienced educators know that establishing purposes for an educational venture is no simple task. One must examine many factors, including the history of the institution, its present and potential resources, its current enrollment and goals for enrollment, the nature of the students the institution seeks to attract, the scope and variety of its curriculum, the extent of responsibilities given to students, the degree of emphasis placed upon the development of values, the constituency served by the institution, and other aspects.

The purposes, when defined in writing, should be the product of discussion by faculty, students, administrators, trustees, and constituents; yet their verbalization should avoid the everpresent danger of getting bogged down in laborious meetings of large groups. Once clarified, these purposes should be a constant guide for specific steps in total institutional renewal.

5. *For long-range effectiveness, renewal must be continuous.*

Once a college or university accomplishes a worthwhile and commendable total institutional renewal — what then? Can a steady state last? The answer is obvious — changing times demand continuous change and adjustment. This approach recognizes that solving a particular problem creates new problems which in turn must be handled. In the past many educational institutions, including Austin College, have accomplished renewal through periods of intensive and exhausting development, often coming every ten years through accrediting procedures. That method has often proved successful, despite its burden of pressures and extra work upon all personnel. Nevertheless, a more routine and systematic approach is mandated if a college is to survive in a rapidly changing society. Continuous renewal calls for in-

stitutionalizing the renewal processes.

Chapter VII describes Austin College's system for continuous renewal. It includes a multi-level approach, with renewal mechanisms at three different levels of operation — renewal procedures for the individual student and the individual faculty member, for each specific program in the curriculum and throughout the institution, and for institutional systems and operations. At each level there are various techniques and processes to raise the renewal issue on a regular basis. Using the multi-level design, the College protects itself in case of a breakdown in any one part of the renewal system. With the installation of such a renewal system, Austin College has taken the one step that caps the total institutional effort — it has assured continuation for the *process* of renewal so that the College can accommodate and react to future change in a more routine manner.

Chapter II

The First Focus of Renewal: Students and Learning

"Focus on students and learning" — that phrase is easy to repeat and easy to agree with. But what does it mean in terms of college planning, programs, and procedures? How can it be implemented, brought to life, and really made the theme of an institution? And is it not already the theme of every institution? Four problems that continually emerge throughout higher education — each suggesting that colleges and universities are not entirely successful in focusing on students and learning — concerned Austin College.

1. *Lack of a coherent bridge between entering students and the world of academics encountered in higher education.*

Most colleges and universities have made sincere efforts to remedy this deficiency. Orientation programs for prospective students have done much to provide a quick acquaintance with the college campus, and other approaches have been instituted, including freshman seminars. All such efforts are to be commended.

Problems remain, however. For example, as described in Chapter I, the increasing diversity among entering students has widened the gap between high school and college for many individuals.

More fundamental is the point that students, even exceptionally strong students, must be helped to understand the changed educational role necessary for lifelong learning. If students can realize the necessity for a changed role, then this "bridge" problem is lifted to a different level. The task is not just to orient persons to a new locale and new procedures, but to effect a change in personal responsibility, to move students from what may have been a passive role in high school to an active self-directing role in college. That type of "bridge" truly focuses on students and learning.

2. *Lack of a personal philosophy of education on the part of students early in the college career.*

An experience common among faculty demonstrates this point. Most faculty are familiar with freshmen and sophomores who are struggling to find a purpose in college education. Likewise, they have heard seniors who, nearing graduation say, "I'm just now discovering what education is all about. The pieces are falling together." What if this typical senior discovery could become an experience in the freshman year? What if freshmen could be led to confront basic decisions about college, vocation, values — would their college years then become more meaningful, more relevant? The societal pressures described in Chapter I add force to the need for this kind of early formulation of a personal philosophy of education.

Students, especially those fresh from high school, can quite easily get off on the wrong foot and in just a short period of time find an entire semester or even a year has been misspent. Such a situation obviously means some wasted time by students. Moreoever, it can bring more serious consequences. Students can become confused and unable to channel adequately their efforts. The final result can be discouragement and dropping out.

In attitude students may range between two extremes: Some students do not know what they want to study, what courses they should take, what degree program to seek. They want to be told what to do. Other students rebel against direction. They want to take courses without proper pre-

requisites, to avoid courses they think they will not like, to devise substitutes for degree requirements. It is a difficult and sensitive undertaking to stimulate students into realizing their responsibility in determining their educational development, to give them real freedom in choices, and at the same time to provide a mechanism which will enable them to evaluate the choices logically and effectively.

3. *The impersonality present on many campuses with attendant floundering by students.*

Lack of personal attention or the students' imagined lack of attention often leads to the impression that, as an institution, the college or university has little concern for the well-being of individual students. Large enrollments in state-sponsored universities and strained financial conditions in smaller colleges tend to aggravate this impression.

For students this feeling of lack of attention can have detrimental effects educationally. For college students, persons at an especially vulnerable time of life, impersonality on campus can affect all they are about, causing loss of direction in courses and in the overall educational task. On the other hand, a real sense of belonging and being valued — what Dr. Yvette Fallandy of California State College at Sonoma has called a sense of the "irreplaceability of the individual" — not only can avoid this problem but also can make a significant contribution to helping students assume greater educational responsibility.

4. *Fragmentation of learning in students' lives with resulting neglect of some features.*

How to deal with whole persons — addressing educational issues in all parts of their lives — is increasingly a problem to be confronted in higher education. Many colleges and universities strive to face the issue. They establish specialists in various offices, such as financial aid, counseling services, career advising, part-time employment, departmental registration, and placement for study abroad. These actions have the advantage

of providing students with persons trained in a particular facet. Yet, this approach tends to create within the college or university a reflection of the larger society — a variety of specialists, each available to help with one segment of student lives, but with no one person interested in the totality of student concerns. Similarly, the tradition of separating knowledge into different disciplines can result in the fragmentation of learning. Students may miss the interrelatedness of knowledge and the wholeness of life.

In terms of education, learning is not confined just to the classroom, laboratory, and library. Much occurs elsewhere, and by failing to recognize this fact in coherent programmatic ways, colleges and universities are missing a crucial opportunity to support their central goal of learning for students. True focus on students and learning takes into account, in significant ways, the full realm of learning which confronts students.

The four problems mentioned above are only some indicators that "focus on students and learning" requires serious attention. Having new teaching strategies in courses and providing more options for students are important, but these approaches must rest on a philosophical foundation that is a reconceptualization of the role of students. That role is one of aggressive self-education and lifelong learning.

Austin College Addresses the Problems

Colleges and universities are addressing the problems in many different ways. Faculty, students, and staff at Austin College have combined a variety of ideas to fit their particular situation. They have forged these ideas together into one coordinated educational approach that attempts to put "focus on students and learning" at the very base of the College. This approach has three aspects — the Individual Development Program and the mentor system, the Communication/Inquiry Program, and the concept of community. These three in-

volvements concentrate on introducing students to new roles in the academic world.

Individual Development and the Mentor System

The Individual Development Program is a comprehensive approach to personal planning and advising carried out by each student with a faculty mentor. The mentor is a faculty adviser who is expected to know the student well enough to be knowledgeable about the student's interests, activities, progress, and problems.

Mentor and student begin by jointly assessing the student's current level of development, not just in the intellectual realm, but in other equally important areas — the vocational, aesthetic, religious/philosophical, social/societal, and physical areas. With this assessment, student and mentor plan steps to be taken by the student to achieve these personal goals and meet the educational standards of the College.

At least once each term, the student discusses the six areas of development with the mentor, and together they work out goals, or possible attainments, in each area for the term. The student consults with the mentor regarding progress toward these goals. At their meeting during the next term, attainment is discussed. Records of goals and achievements are maintained in the mentor's file folder on the student. This assessment and planning involves also the preparation and regular updating of a total educational plan by the students, including a degree plan. The process continues throughout the college years, and at the end of his or her last term the student receives one course credit for planning and participating in various activities to achieve growth in the different areas of development. The student must be involved at least six terms to receive credit.

The process of Individual Development includes having students write reports of analysis and self-evaluation. Outside consultants brought to the campus suggested the preparation of such reports several semesters after the program had been in operation as a means of assuring that the student engages in

thoughtful, substantive self-reflection. The reports are critiqued by the mentor, and records of the student's progress are kept in a portfolio. This portfolio includes not only material originating from the Individual Development process, but also other pertinent information about the student's college life, such as academic records and reports of awards and accomplishments. The portfolio is thus a valuable resource to the student and mentor for the planning process.

Student and mentor are supported through the Educational Advising Office. It is the coordinating point for the Individual Development Program. It houses the student's portfolio, and provides counseling and advising services to support further planning by the student. It also serves as the College's checkpoint to catch emerging problems for an individual student before the problems reach the crisis stage. It thus is an important back-up system for the Individual Development Program, assuring that student and mentor are carrying out the processes on schedule. The staff of the Educational Advising Office closely follow established guidelines to assure confidentiality and the proper use of the student portfolios.

The style of the Individual Development Program is informal, encouraging a free give-and-take spirit between student and mentor. Personal interaction and mutual respect are keys that make the system work. Considerable flexibility is manifest in ways by which faculty and students work together under the mentor system. In conversation a faculty member described his experience as a mentor in the following words:

> I require all of my mentees toward the end of their freshman year to prepare a degree plan in which they list all the courses needed for a degree. I tell them however vague their ideas might be now, they will benefit by looking ahead to their degrees .
>
> After the first year, registration is not a complicated process such as it remains at many universities. All my mentees come to me for approval of their courses at registration, and we work out any problems .

I try to let students know I cannot make decisions for them. I can give them information at times that they do not have. I can share experiences with them. I can raise questions they may not have considered. I can help them clarify alternatives. But the decision must rest with them. If they make mistakes, they must learn to bear the responsibility .

For the College, the mentor system has the advantage of nipping in the bud many potential student problems before they actually become critical either to the student or the College. If the student begins to let down in a class, a slip goes to the student's mentor from the teacher. Chances are that several other persons are becoming aware that something is going wrong with the student, and they, too, pass the word along to the mentor. Thus the student can be counseled before matters become very serious .

For the student — he or she knows there is someone available and ready to listen . . . someone who is not judgmental but with whom the student can talk as a mature friend.

If you listen to an Austin College student talk about the mentor system, you will generally hear what seems like the "flip side" of the mentor's record. Following are excerpts from the unsolicited comments of a new transfer student in her fourth week at Austin College:

I've never known a place where you feel so quickly at home.

Your teachers seem interested in you. If you goof on something they seem primarily interested in whether or not you tried; and if you did, they say — well, keep on trying. They *expect* you to do your best; and you know they do, and then *you* want to do it . . .

Your mentor — the mentor helps you understand the spirit of the place. And understand yourself, too. Take me. When somebody tells me I must do something, I find myself rebelling. Here, your mentor and the other teachers — they tell you what is expected of you. But they also say: the decision is yours. It's up to you. Then I have to say to myself, "Well, what kind of person do I really want to be? Then I say, 'Well, heck . . . I'd better do my best.' "

I'm doing a lot more work here than I did at the College I transferred from. I'm making better grades, too, and I like it. My mentor has shown he appreciates what I am trying to do, and that helps a lot . . .

With the Individual Development course, Austin College is forcing the issue of student responsibility for educational and life plannning. By granting credit for the planning experience, the College is affirming the importance of this process for the student. At the same time, the College is providing the student the necessary support in the form of the mentor, a person concerned with the individual's growth, helpful in moving the student toward an active and constructive educational role, and dedicated to holding up and reflecting the standards of liberal education to the student. Thus, the program is working with attitudes and roles, the affective dimensions of education, and the student as a whole person.

Despite the theory behind Individual Development, however, the program is not problem-free. The elaborate back-up system of the Office of Educational Advising is necessary, and the paper-work involved is frequently criticized by faculty. Related are workload problems for some faculty — it simply takes much time and effort to work personally with students in the Individual Development Program.

In addition to procedural problems, the Individual Development Program also raises substantive questions for some

faculty. As the ALDP report[1] states, some faculty feel

> among other things that the College's rhetoric attracts an unusually high percentage of "psychologically dependent" students whose intellectual potential is "diffused by endless introspection, aided and abetted by their mentors and the whole I. D. apparatus." (p. 14)

These dangers are being recognized and efforts are being made to offset such negative results. For most students it seems evident that the mentor system provides a needed interrelation between faculty and student, and the Individual Development process encourages the student to accept with increasing self-dependence responsibility for his or her educational decisions.

Communication/Inquiry

Student and mentor work from a base of understanding greater than usual for academic advisers because their relationship begins in a seven-week course, Communication/Inquiry. This course is one of two credit courses which the entering student takes during the first seven weeks on campus. Three elements are integrated in the course: (1) the student's understanding of self, including his or her continually evolving values, educational plans, and personal goals; (2) the principles and methods of sound and mature intellectual inquiry; and (3) the development of skills and understanding in communication. The

[1]During the academic year 1977-78 Austin College Professor of Philosophy Gerald Hinkle pursued "The Question of Excellence at Austin College" as part of the Academic Leadership Development Program of the Association for Innovation in Higher Education. In pursuing the question, he surveyed fellow faculty members, current students, and recent graduates. Although the surveys were limited in number, they are perceived as being representative of attitudes more widely held. Dr. Hinkle often quoted the surveys in his written "Report on the Processes, People, and End-products Making for Quality Education at Austin College," and some of those quotes are used throughout this book, identified as coming from Dr. Hinkle's ALDP report.

course also provides the traditional orientation function for new students.

The course is divided into sections of 18-20 freshmen, and each section is organized around the study of a contemporary issue. The study of the contemporary issue is thus the vehicle to examine personal and social values, to engage in intellectual inquiry, and to practice and recognize the elements of effective communication. The course also provides the traditional orientation function for the new student. Some of the topics offered most recently include:

Philosopher-King: The Egghead in Politics
The Value of Lifetime Sports
Immunology, Aging and Cancer
The Cold War in Fact and Fiction
Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Fear*
*(But Were Afraid to Ask)
To Be a Man — To Be a Woman
The Kingdom of God and the Struggle for Justice

Leaders of each section are one faculty member, who becomes the freshmen's mentor, and one or two upperlevel students. The leaders work as a team, sharing decisions and responsibilities.

The student leader's role is crucial. He or she is a connecting link between the freshmen and other students on campus. Frequently two student leaders are assigned to a Communication/Inquiry section so that more contact points are available for the entering students.

The importance of the role of the student leader is underscored by the fact that he or she must participate in Communication/Leadership, a related advanced course which focuses primarily on the information, coordination, and training needed to carry out responsibilities in Communication/Inquiry and in other leadership roles. In Communication/Leadership the student leaders study resources from various disciplines about leadership development. The student leader role in Communication/Inquiry then serves as a practicum experience for the Communication/Leadership course.

Communication/Inquiry, in purpose and procedures, serves as an important bridge between high school and college for entering students. Leaders of each section are supplied in advance with information regarding the new students to be in their section, and during the course opportunity is offered for determining the capacity levels of the students in various fields, such as reading and composition. More significantly, however, the course serves as a pathway to the college experience.

The style of each Communication/Inquiry section varies greatly, depending on the freshmen involved and the personal dynamics of the leadership team. The contemporary topics of the various sections are purposely diverse in recognition of widely differing interests among students.

For freshmen in all sections, however, Communication/Inquiry is an important foundational course for the entire college career. Emphasis on inquiry and communication methods are obvious; more, however, is involved. The personal relationships with a faculty member and one or two upper-level student leaders demonstrate from the first day on campus that the new student is important. Close work with 18-20 other freshmen not only gives the new student a peer group to identify with, but also speaks to the need to work together cooperatively in groups. Experience in group dynamics and other skill-building exercise is part of the course. Emphasis on values feeds into student needs to think seriously about personal objectives and educational philosophy. Communications/Inquiry is the structure within which the student starts Individual Development — in Communication/Inquiry the student must make a tentative projection of educational goals and the manner in which to pursue the goals.

The degree of importance which Austin College places on this kind of experience can be demonstrated by the calendar the College uses. That calendar begins with a 14-week fall term and divides it into two 7-week sessions. During each 7-week session freshmen students may take two courses. Upper-level students may take a combination of 14-week and 7-week courses during the fall term. There is also a 4-week January Term and a 14-week spring term. This calendar was adopted to allow special attention for entering students, to provide

fewer course experiences of greater concentration in the beginning of the college career so that students would have a better chance of assuming a more active educational role.

Communication/Inquiry has not been without its problems. Its goals, other than orientation, are far-reaching, and it has been difficult to establish what progress could be expected toward each. Some faculty members felt that much more has been expected than can be achieved in the seven weeks. Also, progress has been found to vary widely among students. In the first few years of the program, the substantive content of the classes seemed uneven in depth and effectiveness. In addition, experience in those first years indicated a need for less uniformity and greater flexibility in methods of conducting the course, permitting adaptations to the interests of students in each section and the characteristic approach best fitted to the course leaders.

Evaluations have also shown strong points, however. The function of Communication/Inquiry as an introduction to college is consistently rated positively. In addition, the freshmen uniformly give high ratings to the availability and concern of the faculty and student leaders, even though some leaders are rated more effective than others.

The Communication/Inquiry and Individual Development Programs are closely related, and thus it is not surprising that they both enjoy the same kind of positive evaluation, such as that concerning personal relationships, and the same kind of negative evaluation, such as that concerning the need for strengthening the substantive content of the courses.

The Concept of Community

Emphasis on "community" emerges out of consideration of the devisive factors that have fragmented elements of society. A college or university in itself is a community of diverse individuals — students, faculty, staff, administrators, trustees. All come from a variety of backgrounds. In some college communities antagonisms divide students from faculty, faculty from administration, untenured professors from ten-

ured, "favored" departments from those in disfavor.

The challenge is to recognize that learning is occurring in the total environment on campus, and to encourage the kind of environment that is most conducive to focus on students and learning. Different approaches can be used to bring about an environment conducive to learning. At Austin College, a residential college, the approach is to emphasize "community" and to incorporate openly the "living experience" as a significant part of the educational process.

An honor system with emphasis on self-discipline is a base for the Austin College concept of community. This honor system applies to all faculty and staff in addition to students and covers not just personal and academic behavior but also community membership. The attempt is to demonstrate that the people who make up the College must be committed to the kind of educational program and community environment that will allow the College and its members to attain their personal and institutional goals.

But the honor system is only the beginning of "community." The honor system is not just a control device. It is a means for freeing individuals to work toward personal and shared goals. Learning is viewed as being fostered by association, by interaction among individuals. Moreover, the focus on the student and on changed educational roles cause traditional patterns to be outdated. Students need to have a significant place outside the classroom, not just within it. The cooperative nature of the educational enterprise must be consistent, with all working together in a climate of trust and mutual respect.

Austin College has implemented this idea of community in various ways, such as providing for student membership in a Governing Council where representatives of faculty, administrators, staff and students sit down together to legislate campus policies. Student participation is also provided in evaluation and planning procedures for all programs. These governance and operational features are described in Chapter V.

Perhaps the best example of community is the manner in which Austin College changed its programs and structures in

the early 1970's. The entire educational program and almost all courses and activities were redesigned. For that effort all participated — faculty, students, administrators, trustees, alumni — but faculty and students took the lead. In each of four consecutive summers, thirty or more students spent six weeks on campus working with faculty to structure programs and activities. During the academic year faculty and students tested the ideas they had formulated during the summer, and refinements were made the following summer. The changes ranged from the design of new courses to the creation of whole new programs. In all of this activity students worked side by side with faculty and struggled with the same educational issues.

This kind of involvement reflects the spirit of community Austin College is striving to develop — one with shared concerns and responsibilities. It is this kind of community approach at Austin College which is most conducive to focus on students and on learning.

When trying to determine the effectiveness of the community concept, one must view the objectives which have motivated the approach toward the creation of a living-learning environment on the Austin College campus. The maintenance of scholastic honesty, as on other campuses, is an essential goal, but the Austin College approach envisions scholastic honesty as the natural outgrowth of self-discipline. It is also an outgrowth of living in a community where there is concern for others and for commonly held principles. In a very real sense, therefore, the honor system to which incoming faculty, staff, and students must commit themselves forms the basis for an educational process rather than an enforcement process.

Tensions emerging from student life on the campus come primarily from areas of human living, not from issues of scholastic integrity. As a residence hall director explained:

> What may seem dishonest to me might not seem dishonest to someone else — students come to the campus with greatly differing standards. Borrowing someone's book and carelessly failing to return it, or drinking the carton of milk that another student has left

> for mid-morning refreshment is thoughtless, but perhaps not dishonest. Many students have never had to exercise self-discipline, and they immediately resent dorm regulations imposed for the benefit of others. Often the experience of living with others is strange and the accommodation of one's ways to the ways of other students is difficult.

In agreeing to abide by the honor principle, students pledge themselves not to lie, but lying is difficult to detect. Undoubtedly some students may lie to teachers about reasons for lateness of work, and the attitude of trustfulness generally expressed by the faculty may encourage such attempts. An offsetting factor, however, is the openness of communication maintained between students and faculty that tends to generate honesty.

Acceptance of this broad concept of "community responsibility" is not universal among Austin College students. According to the ALDP report:

> "Community-where it counts," in the lengthy testimony of one student interviewed by the ALDP Fellow, "is utterly lacking." That student, soon to graduate, went on to say, "When I came to A. C., the Honor and Behavior Principles were violated now and then; but everyone seemed to feel that there was a loss of some importance to the rest of us when it happened. Now everyone seems to be so self-serving, so grade-conscious, and so intent on succeeding at all costs that the very issues of Honor and Behavior are dismissed by many as being 'beside the point.' 'Tough, man — make it the best way you can for yourself' is the attitude." (p. 21)

The negative view of one student, fortunately not typical, nevertheless indicates that efforts to place responsibilities in student hands carry the risk of misuse by some students. At Austin College this calculated risk has been considered worth taking.

New Roles for the Student

The creation of the three major educational innovations described in this chapter provides a framework and philosophy which place students at the center of the Austin College operation. Collectively, these changes demand a re-orientation of the faculty and a changed emphasis by the institution — and these shifts in approach will be discussed in later chapters. But most centrally the three together — Individual Development with its close dependence upon the mentor system, Communication/Inquiry, and the concept of community — call for deepened understandings and new concepts on the part of students. Such roles defy precise description, but the following generalizations reflect the essence of the sought-for changes.

—The student becomes less of a recipient of what the College has prepared for him or her, and more of an active participant in accepting responsibility for digging out of the College the best possible education to fit the student's needs.

—As the student moves upward during his or her college years, the student becomes increasingly involved with faculty and staff in determining the nature of programs and their manner of operation. The student enters into decision-making regarding a meaningful educational program for the College involving the whole student.

—The role of the student in relation to teachers shifts from regarding the teacher as an authority figure or dogmatic dictator to seeing the teacher as the leader of a team of individuals participating together in the search for truth.

Principles Emerging from The Austin College Experience

Certain principles are emerging from the Austin College experience. These principles may be useful to others interested in focusing on students and learning.

1. *"Focus on students and learning" is a matter of the*

fundamental place of students in a college's efforts, not just a matter of changes within courses.

Meeting students at the level of their needs and then working from there on educational philosophy and goals is crucial. Bringing such considerations into the framework of a *credit experience* says much about the importance a college gives to this emphasis.

2. *The beginning days and weeks of college life may be crucial for students.*

A specific transition experience thus assumes great importance. It may even be so important that special arrangements are called for, such as courses just for new students and modification of calendars to relieve some of the course pressure on the new students and allow them the opportunity to start forming a secure philosophical base for the college years.

3. *Personal support and interaction can be a crucial factor for some new students.*

A personal contact point for new students may have to be structured into the first days and weeks of campus life. Relationships with peers, with upperlevel students, and with faculty are all important. Providing for continuing personal contact throughout the college career also has to be considered, though the need for structure can decrease.

4. *Development of the whole person has to be approached with specific programs and activities.*

Making individual development in various areas a credit-bearing experience gives substance to this widely espoused goal. In addition, acknowledgement that learning occurs outside the classroom and official incorporation of that learning into the educational program can reinforce and support learning in the classroom.

5. *"Community may be increasingly important for education.*

Learning is occurring outside the classroom, and students are spending the majority of their time out of class. Efforts should thus be made to construct a total environment conducive to learning, thus requiring conscious attempts to create a sense of community.

6. *Programs and approaches that build on one another and are interrelated may have the best chance of making a real impact on students.*

There is less likelihood that focus on students and learning will occur if only one course or program is seen as the way to implement the idea. Role change for students is a challenge, to say the least, and constant efforts must be made to work toward it. Programs and approaches that overlap, that pick up where one leaves off, that separately meet different needs that comprise the total challenge — those appear to give greater impetus to moving toward the overall goal.

Chapter III

Reshaping the Curriculum, Programs, and Courses

While focus on students and learning may require concentrated efforts in particular courses and programs, still this theme has to be picked up and carried throughout the entire curriculum. Changing tasks and roles applies to all educational endeavors and has to be expressed from course to course, program to program. The need for change in all courses and programs is thus an extension of the need to address the problems cited in Chapter II. In addition, two other continuing problems demand that attention be given the curriculum.

1. *Pressures toward uniformity and conformity.*

Traditionally established degree programs tend to channel students through the college years into common pathways. Too often students have precious little leeway to design plans that take into account personal needs and goals in a meaningful way. Structures make it difficult for students to assume responsibility for directing their own education.

For many colleges and universities a key factor in degree programs is a set of core courses which all students must take. Historically these core courses have been discipline-bound and have exposed all students to a variety of subjects. Recently there has been some liberalization of degree programs. In many

instances, though, changes have been made to accommodate wishes of the faculty and resources of the institution. Less attention has been paid to the societal pressures described in Chapter I and to the implication of those for the needs of students.

2. *Adherence to a relatively small spectrum of similar teaching-learning techniques in the classroom and in courses.*

Just as there is a tendency toward sameness in the overall college program, so too there is a lack of diversity in specific classroom and course procedures. The predominant use of the lecture system is perhaps most vulnerable to attack. Although the lecture has a justified place among the wide assortment of teaching-learning strategies, it is doubtful if it, or any other one strategy, is so valuable to student learning that it should be used the majority of time.

Quantity is not the only issue, however. The nature of various styles is also a consideration. If focus on students and learning is truly important, then techniques and styles used in the classroom must be supportive of that thrust. The addition of styles that limit possibilities for active student roles will be of little value. But changes in courses that result in encouragement of the pursuit of knowledge by students can increase the possibility of meeting the needs of a greater number of students.

Austin College Addresses the Problems

Redesign of curriculum obviously involves degree programs, course design, and course sequence, but it also extends more deeply into the very being of a college. It calls for consideration of such additional factors as a clear delineation of educational goals, a pre-determined approach to the subject matter of courses in terms of educational purpose, clear knowledge of the constituency and understanding their needs, and attention to classroom techniques. No traditional approach need be considered sacred purely because it is traditional. Thus curriculum renewal must relate

also to such tangible factors as college calendar, length of class period, prerequisites, credit value of courses, and limits in size of faculty, enrollment, and financial resources. This type of fundamental and total curricular reform is the kind which Austin College planned and carried out.

The Process of Curricular and Course Reform

Obviously the comprehensive approach required considerable planning and effort. Austin College had a history of experimental projects, including the recent incorporation of a flexible January Term into its yearly calendar, and extensive use of independent and directed studies. By the fall term of 1969 decisions had been made to undertake a comprehensive reconsideration of the entire curriculum — an objective that broadened as it progressed until it became a total institutional renewal. The planning process began in 1969 with OPENS: Operation Planning Educational Next Steps. This two-year period proved to be one of great tensions and struggles as decisions were made regarding the whole new shape of the educational program.

Discussions in the OPENS period occurred in standing committees and task forces composed of faculty and students. A steering committee of administrative officers provided coordination for the various groups and leadership for the entire OPENS project. Culminating this two-year period was the design of a totally reconstructed educational program in which every course would undergo changes. This design included a new 2-2-1-4 (referring to months) college calendar with different class period lengths; an outline of a core of six interdisciplinary courses; and a more flexible degree pattern with varieties of options for students. Implicit in the new design was emphasis on self-directed choices for students and a process of re-examination of all existing courses.

Once the new curriculum was designed in the OPENS process, it was then legislated through the faculty as a body, the faculty council, and the trustees. Important presuppositions of the legislation were that the new approaches be handled legislatively as one integral design, and that a four-year trial period be used

before major alterations were considered. Minor adjustments probably would be needed, but major changes would have to wait. The innovations would be given a fair chance to work.

In the summer of 1971, immediately following the formal adoption of the new educational program, planning groups of faculty and students began working in depth on the detailed design of the new interdisciplinary core courses. Outlines of the courses were projected tentatively, and in the following academic year pilot versions of these courses were taught and evaluated.

Experience during the OPENS period clearly demonstrated that effective planning is a very time-demanding procedure. Therefore, proposals for the venture in total curriculum renewal recognized the need for special procedures to implement the newly legislated reforms.

Thus, after the design period of OPENS ended, the implementation period began. Special procedures were structured into Summer Resource Laboratories, six-week long working sessions held each summer over a period of four years. Each of these laboratories brought together a majority of the faculty with about 30 or more selected students, requiring the full-time of all participants. A wide variety of consultants was provided for the workshops and task forces which comprised each of the summer laboratories. These intensive planning sessions were held in the summers of 1972, 1973, 1974, and 1975, with functions as summarized below.

The six-week 1972 Summer Resource Laboratory began with a two-week workshop dealing with changing tasks and roles in higher education. Participants included 65 faculty and 25 students. Outside consultants presented information about trends in higher education and exchanged ideas about specific approaches used by others. After this two-week workshop session, the Summer Resource Laboratory participants divided into four task forces — with members of each task force being from various disciplines and including both faculty and students — to work on the core courses, free from any traditional pattern. The experience of the pilot versions during the previous year was reviewed, and each course planned in detail for the next year.

The 1973 Summer Resource Laboratory, with 61 faculty and 39 students participating, tackled "Learning Modes and

Program Elements," with emphasis on disciplinary courses rather than core courses. Learning Mode task forces explored use of computers, student-paced learning, educational television, peer teaching, and other approaches. Program task forces considered goal setting, content, and evaluation procedures for disciplinary offerings.

The 1974 Summer Resource Laboratory involved a process of considering proposals for further innovation as submitted by faculty members during the spring semester. Fifty faculty members and 33 students participated. Leaders in various innovative aspects of education served as consultants as faculty redesigned specific courses which they regularly taught.

The 1975 Summer Resource Laboratory, with 59 faculty and 39 students, provided opportunity for evaluating the changes made in the three experimental years just passed. Considerable attention focused on preparing program evaluation reports — analyzing, describing, and providing rationale for recent developments. Also, attention was turned to projecting future directions and trends. Particular attention was given to meshing the various curricular developments with other changes occurring in the College, such as new governance and operational procedures (described in Chapter V).

In addition to the consultants who aided in the Summer Resource Laboratories, the College arranged for a nine-member Advisory Panel to meet on campus twice a year for the four years, usually for a two-day visit. The Advisory Panel, as a group and as individual consultants, evaluated existing and proposed educational innovations and exchanged ideas with the faculty.

By the fall of 1975 the total curriculum of the College had been examined, redesigned, and pulled together as a coherent educational venture. Each year the process of evaluation and adjustment had continued as a refining procedure, and in the next two years came the time to stand back from the various operations, to evaluate their strengths and weaknesses, and to make major as well as minor alterations. The looked-for result of these years of renewal, experimentation, and evaluation was not intended to be a curriculum frozen into a lasting pattern; rather the accomplishment being sought was the establishment

of a totally reconstructed program capable of continued adaptation to students' changing needs.

The New Curriculum

Although the new curriculum was not fully implemented until the end of the four-year special project, it began to be phased in the year after it was legislated. The newly constructed program was titled IDEAS: "Individual Development: Encounter with the Arts and Sciences." The use of this title was an attempt to convey the unity of the Austin College educational program and its main emphasis.

An end-of-the-venture report states some of the reasons for the change to the new curriculum:

> To make the best traditions of liberal arts education more meaningful for the modern student by recognizing cognitive and affective aspects of learning and by adding emphasis on the use of the arts and sciences and teachings in many disciplines to meet the demands for effective and creative living in today's world.[1]

Another reason was to recognize that a fundamental shift is being sought in the approach to the educational process with the objectives

> for students to become more self-directed in their learning, for faculty to become more skilled in facilitating the learning and maturation of students, and for the college to become more capable of sustaining institutional self-renewal on a long-term continuing basis.[2]

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[1] *Changing Tasks and Roles in Higher Education.* (Sherman, Texas: Austin College) 1976, p. 25.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 5.

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Attention was placed not just on absorption of facts but also on the process of change, on learning how to cope with change, and methods for lifelong learning. From the curricular standpoint, this shift was effected through (1) creation of a new core of interdisciplinary courses; (2) adjustments in degree programs to encourage self-direction and individualization; and (3) qualities strongly emphasized in the new curriculum which influenced the approach to and manner of presentation in both old and new courses.

New Core Courses

The first Summer Resource Lab tackled the freshman year as the most critical year for students. Out of the lab discussions emerged six core interdisciplinary courses. These six courses are designed to have continuity as a whole and collectively to comprise the base of a solid liberal arts education.

Two of the core courses, *Communication/Inquiry* and *Individual Development,* have been described in the preceding chapter. They are unique courses, designed to set the pattern for an individualized and self-directed educational experience, and they are required for all entering freshmen in their first seven-week term. *Individual Development* must be continued, as described previously, during each of the student's terms.

The freshman also begins a sequence of three interdisciplinary core courses dealing with the Heritage of Western Culture. The Task Force which designed the sequence described its purposes as follows:

> In content the sequence is far more than a traditional set of courses in Western Civilization. Rather it is a key part of the liberal education designed to involve the student in self-direction, for it provides the foundation needed for one's understanding of his current intellectual position . . . In the college student's year on a campus he is often confronted with the quest for meaning . . . Thus he is ready to relate himself to similar quests in the past and to develop a common universe of discourse with fellow students . . . The student should gain an awareness of the dimensions of western cultural

development, new skills of critical thought and expression, and a better understanding of the relationship between his own values and those of his heritage.[3]

The catalogue description of the three courses indicates the area of subject matter.

HWC 11 - Perspectives on Cultural Roots (To be taken in the freshman year):
Examination of the continuing human quest for meaning through studies of four societal traditions from antiquity: Greece, Rome, ancient Israel, and the early Christian Church. Values associated with those societies are seen in relation to issues faced by western people today.

HWC 12 - Development of European Culture (To be taken in the sophomore year):
Analysis of shifting world views, of continuing tensions about value priorities, and of the emerging significance for the modern west of the experience of European peoples during the periods usually called the Middle Ages and the Renaissance.

HWC 21 - Alternatives for Cultural Change (To be taken in a term after completion of HWC 12):
A critical examination of the alternatives for cultural change in the modern world through study of the different cultures produced by the impact of modern technology, responses based on theories of progress, discordant voices of the twentieth century, and reflections on prospects for the future with a look toward the year 2000.[4]

The sixth required core course is *Policy Research.* It is a multi-disciplinary and problem-oriented course taken by advanced level students. The course is supervised by a faculty team

[3] *Changing Tasks and Roles in Higher Education,* pp. 38-39.

[4] *Austin College Bulletin,* 1978-1979, pp. 37-38.

and requires the investigation of different aspects of a current societal problem in order to develop viable alternatives to the problem's solution. Some topics in recent terms include:

Criminal Justice System: Is Punishment a Crime?
Alcohol: Social Lubricant or Source of Social Illness?
Is Death a Right?
How Should Americans Eat?
Can We Eliminate Child Abuse?

The intention of the course is to acquaint students with a real-life situation and to provide exposure to various methods for seeking solutions.

These six core courses — Communication Inquiry, Individual Development, the three Heritage of Western Culture courses, and Policy Research — are intended to provide a framework for the student's educational experience. They constitute the most innovative aspect of the total curriculum renewal.

Revised Degree Programs

In basic structure the revised degree programs seem similar to most bachelor's degree programs. The difference lies in the degree of flexibility and individualization permitted within the large segments of the program. Austin College now has three degree plan options available to students.

1. The Basic Program requires 34 courses within the following groups:

a. The six required core courses, as described above.

b. An exploratory sequence of six or more courses: These courses, not closely related to the student's field of concentration, are intended to broaden the student's experience in the liberal arts, including social science, science, fine arts, communication, history, and other fields, but without a prescribed set to be followed by every student.

c. A field of concentration (major), usually requiring six to eight courses but permitting up to eleven.

d. Electives sufficient to complete the total requirement.

The Basic Program permits considerable individualization through collaboration between the student and mentor. The

influence of the mentor, while not dictatorial, is intended to be strong enough to divert the student from confusing fragmentation, since approval of the mentor is essential at each registration.

2. The Special Program may be utilized by qualified students who desire an interdisciplinary degree. With the aid of their mentor, they must prepare a written degree design, including the six core courses. The proposed plan must then be approved by a faculty committee.

3. The Austin Honors Program provides for considerable amounts of independent study and research, often involving off-campus studies. Only students who have achieved the status of "Austin Scholar" — the upper 3 percent in grades — are eligible to devise such a program, with the aid and approval of their mentor and approval of a faculty committee.

Changes Throughout the Curriculum Courses and Programs

The shift to placing students at the center of course presentation created something of a chain reaction. The traditional classroom lecture had to give way to a more informal procedure in which students are led to be vocal about what they have learned and what they think. Class discussion, use of media, problem-oriented approaches — these and other classroom approaches were considered anew for incorporation into courses. Participation in flexible January Term programs provided helpful experiences for new directions.

For increased emphasis on educational self-direction by students, class assignments became more varied and individualized within courses. Moreover, in many cases teacher and student worked together in fixing specific assignments for reports, research, and special studies.

To increase the relevance of liberal arts courses to the "outside society," students had to be given increased opportunity to demonstrate how values and processes discovered in liberal arts studies may be applied helpfully in current society. Ideas began to emerge for appropriate opportunities for student enterprises, such as a quarterly publication by

economic students on economic trends and conditions in the area surrounding the College.

In summary, every course and program was re-examined. The goal was to make sure the focus was on students and learning. There was no effort to secure uniformity in approach to subject matter or in method of presentation, but there was emphasis on thinking about a course as though the teacher were offering it for the first time.

Measuring the degree of success of such new approaches is difficult. The ALDP report, though not a definitive study, does nevertheless reveal a range of attitudes through its survey of faculty, students, and graduates.

Two graduates expressed their thoughts in these ways:

> I left college with many more questions than answers, but with new tools, techniques, and devices — skills — that enabled me to continue my education . . . (p. B-2) I am an educated person in that I am able to talk to people in all walks of life. It hasn't helped me find a job; but if I find one, I feel certain that it will give me the ability to advance rapidly . . . that is the result of A. C.'s broad definition of learning, stressing participation in non-academic activities and concern for self-understanding along with course work. (p. B-2)

Certain hazards were encountered in the push toward comprehensive curriculum adaptation. In the same ALDP survey one student questioned the possibility of "innovation for innovation's sake" (p. B-3). Another indicated that not all students want the responsibility of exercising the freedom of choice permitted under the proposed programs (p. B-3). Weaknesses emerged as some of the innovative ventures proved ineffective, and faculty members were quick to point out such weaknesses. Such results, rather than suggesting that no changes be made, were interpreted as indicating the need for continuing re-evaluation and adaptation.

Principles Emerging From The Austin College Experience

As one reviews the struggles of Austin College to re-examine and re-design the total curriculum, certain principles emerge.

1. *The philosophical framework in which curriculum reform is to occur must be clear to all.*

Another way of stating this is to say that there should be a central purpose or thrust behind the specific efforts to make them most effective. For Austin College, the framework was provided by the philosophy and concepts behind the IDEAS program.

2. *Piecemeal adjustments in parts of a curriculum may well be beneficial, but periodically a comprehensive re-examination of the whole curriculum is essential.*

When a major effort is needed, such as total renewal to focus better on students and learning, the comprehensive approach seems even more necessary.

3. *Total curriculum re-examination is most likely to be effective if faculty, administration, students, staff, and trustees are all involved in and committed to the project.*

Further, the mixing of individuals on task forces and committees across lines of academic discipline fosters change throughout the institution rather than merely within the boundaries of academic disciplines. Individuals can become informed about the efforts of colleagues in other areas and get ideas and support for their own attempts at change.

4. *One way of building commitment to the reform effort is to legislate an entire new educational program based on the reform and then follow with implementation.*

The initial legislative action communicates the institution's commitment to the effort and makes clear the responsibility of individuals to implement the program legislated.

5. *Comprehensive student participation is recommended.*

Involving students in the planning process not only assures consideration of their perspective, but also helps them develop new attitudes about the meaning, and purpose of learning. It is an educational experience in itself.

6. *Qualified consultants can be invaluable in the sharing of ideas, raising of questions, and providing objective evaluations of proposals.*

Consultants can be especially helpful in the early stages to acquaint faculty with new ideas and to legitimize the process and substance of innovation.

7. *Curriculum renewal should go beyond the mere designation of course subject and course groupings in degree programs.*

Renewal should take into account such factors as the approach to course content, the increase of self-learning opportunities for the student, the recognition of diversity among the students (to the extent possible), and the stimulation of creativity.

8. *Curriculum examination and renewal are time-consuming and costly undertakings.*

Much is demanded in such a venture. A recommended approach is the setting aside of an extended period of time in which participating faculty members, students, and consultants are freed from other duties to devote full-attention to the project. Extra time and resources are required.

9. *Certain specific changes — yearly calendar, new program, new core, daily schedule with longer class periods — can spur renewal throughout the whole curriculum.*

When basic, framework changes are made, other changes are more likely to follow. For example, a calendar providing an initial seven-week course for freshmen facilitates the formulation of an entire new course to meet the needs of entering students. Similarly, January Term programs can provide an opportunity for experimentation with content and method that later can be useful in programs and courses offered during other terms.

10. *Curricular adjustments need extended time for trial, evaluation, and improvement, and distinct, separate periods for design and for implementation are helpful.*

A pattern of planning and design, followed by implementation and a period of executing the design, and concluded with an evaluation period of adaptations and adjustments as needed seems an effective sequence.

Chapter IV

Renewal and the College Faculty

Today's environment of higher education is making faculty renewal essential. The boom in college enrollments is tapering off and some colleges are losing enrollment. With a status-quo situation in enrollment and in number of faculty, the injection of new ideas through additions to the faculty is slowing. The situation seems to call for a quota on tenured faculty, but that step might cause problems for the reward system. On the other hand, if no quota is imposed and nearly all faculty members become tenured, there is a risk that — without imaginative leadership — older faculty members may become content with their teaching methods and fail to keep up with their discipline.

Similarly, though the total enrollment of an institution may remain stable, a faculty member may experience shifts, sometimes major ones, from one academic field or responsibility to another. As enrollment diminishes in one subject, fewer classes can be offered and the teachers of that subject must either be dismissed or assigned to teach in a field in which they have less training. Preparing for such career changes may become more and more a part of faculty life. Hence the importance of faculty development.

Obstacles to Faculty Renewal

Faculty renewal is not easy. Often faculty want very much to update their teaching methods, to keep abreast of new information in order that they may remain at the "cutting edge" of new insights in their disciplinary field. But because of limited time and resources, faculty usually find it difficult to follow these pursuits, much less to engage in role changes. Thus, renewal of faculty faces obstacles.

1. *Failure to approach renewal from a fundamental standpoint, including consideration of the faculty's needs.*

A well considered approach to faculty renewal is no superficial matter. It must be comprehensive and deal with issues on a fundamental level. For example, far too often the renewed effort is not connected adequately to the best interests of the person involved. Moreover, the focus of concern should extend beyond just professional considerations — basic attitudes are crucial. The future may well be a time when factors other than direct monetary compensation became important to faculty, factors such as a feeling of importance and competence, opportunities for intellectual stimulation and the freedom to direct one's own future. All these subtle factors should be considered.

The need to deal with fundamental issues and attitudes does not mean that other more commonly considered aspects should be ignored. For example, the traditional pattern of incentive and renewal rests upon a typical faculty career confined within a discipline, with assignments in teaching, time allotted for research and publication, and opportunities for developing leadership within the discipline. When the roles of faculty members are changed, obviously the reward system has to be reconsidered also.

2. *Difficulty of faculty to assume full responsibility for renewal, especially in the area of educational techniques.*

As already noted, a faculty member rarely has the time or

resources to keep abreast of developments outside the disciplinary field, even when the desire is present. The knowledge explosion in disciplinary fields is challenge enough.

In some cases, too, a lack of understanding leads to a lack of involvement by faculty in consideration of teaching-learning strategies. A few years ago colleges and universities engaged in a rush of efforts to improve the effectiveness of teaching in response to charges against the lecture system. Workshops on the use of multimedia presentation, preparation of quizzes, and similar topics were designed and made available to many faculty, but too often they were disregarded by experienced faculty. Part of the reason may have been failure of institutional leaders to make clear why change is needed and why change can be beneficial to faculty.

Austin College Addresses the Problems

Throughout higher education the current method of attacking the problems associated with faculty renewal is the creation of faculty development programs. In creating its faculty development program, Austin College has recognized both tangible and subtle shifts that have been taking place in the roles of college faculty members. Sister Joel Read, president of Alverno College and former president of the American Association of Higher Education, pointed to areas of enlarged faculty responsibility as she spoke at a meeting of educators. In summary, she mentioned these aspects:

— There is a basic and fundamental change in the nature of the substance handled through higher education. History of civilization as taught has generally focused on the human history of migration and developing technology. What we teach today must relate to the great involvements of society. Today we are involved in more than an outward journey in migration and a linkage of technology with those advances. We are now involved in what some persons call personal or human development: questions of civil rights, social rights, international understanding and good will, and economic rights.

(Suggested by Sister Joel's observation is the need to change the approach and emphasis of most courses.)

— Traditionally the professor has been a teacher; now the faculty member must also — openly — be a learner. Such a role has long been perceived by some teachers, but it now deserves greater emphasis. Thus the role of the teacher, confronted with the flow of new information, changes from the authoritative figure of the past to a colleague of students in the learning process.

— Traditionally professors have decided what will be taught in those courses assigned to them. Now course content is often decided by a committee or a program director, and where several sections are offered in a course, examinations are prepared by a committee for uniform testing.

— Outside pressures are increasingly being felt within college circles, resulting in a changing emphasis on teacher accountability. Legislatures are questioning college expenditures, federal granting agencies require proof of results, parents can become an irritating constituency, and students are becoming more critically vocal through teacher evaluations. "In part, at least, this change is a reflection of the consumer movement," Sister Joel commented.

Sister Joel emphasized that these new responsibilities do not displace "the functions of teaching, advising, and assessment which we have always had; *these must simply be raised to a new level of refinement.*"[1]

Sister Joel has spoken primarily of influences which bear upon the role of the faculty member as a teacher. Austin College also is interested in roles beyond the teaching function. Dr. Mary Lynn Crow, Director of the Faculty Development Resource Center at the University of Texas at Arlington, offers one view of a broadened scope for the faculty development movement:

[1]Sister Joel Read in *An Invitational Conference on the Changing Tasks and Roles in Higher Education: Summary Report* (Sherman, Texas: Austin College, 1976), pp. 43-48.

> The faculty development movement is truly a unique phenomenon of the 1970's. Today, like its cognate fields of public school education, psychology, psychiatry, and social work, it is chacterized by emphasis upon the total development of the faculty member — as a person, as a professional, and as a member of the academic community. The expanded definition therefore moves out from development as a teacher to include development as an individual and as a group member, and to focus on the person's development and growth in all of his or her professional roles. It therefore focuses upon the organizational structure, the academic milieu within which the faculty member must function. The premise here is that the organization functions either as an enabling or an impedimentary structure, and eventually the faculty member's growth and development will be stymied unless the organization within which he functions also keeps pace . . .[2]

It is this kind of broad faculty development program described by Dr. Crow that Austin College has implemented. The program was phased in with the change in educational program described in the previous chapter.

Influence of Curriculum Planning on Faculty Attitude

At the beginning of the process of curriculum renewal as described in Chapter III — indeed, prior to the first Summer Resource Laboratory — the relationship between the change in educational program and faculty development was made clear. The Summer Resource Laboratory, the implementing structure for the new program, was seen as "the strongest way for a faculty

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[2]Mary Lynn Crow, "Faculty Development: What's in a Name?" *Faculty Development and Evaluation in Higher Education*, Vol. 2, Issue 1, Spring, 1976, p. 3.

member to get at the business of career development.''[9] Thus, the Austin College faculty's efforts in program and role changes were initial steps in the formal Career Development Program which would begin in the following years.

The four years devoted to curriculum renewal and the years of testing and adjustment that followed worked some noticeable changes in attitudes on the part of many faculty. Some moved away from viewing their work solely within the confines of their discipline and have considered its place in the total educational program of the institution. Some have become more concerned with educational theory and methodology, more concerned with interdisciplinary approaches to contemporary issues and problems, and more willing to devote their efforts beyond teaching in the discipline to other duties essential to the institution. Work in the new core courses provided faculty with experience in new approaches and ideas, experience helpful to them for their disciplinary courses. Thus, in addition to filling the role of teacher, many faculty have become program planners and truly educators.

The experience of the four six-week Summer Resource Laboratories also contributed to a change in faculty attitude toward students. In each of the summer laboratories student participants equaled from one-half to two-thirds the number of faculty participants; and students, as full members of the group, participated in decisions regarding course content, educational goals, and degree alignments. As stated earlier, the impact upon the attitude of these students toward their education was remarkably beneficial, but it should also be noted that this association with students in the planning process began a faculty-student interchange which carried over into classrooms, aiding the shift from primarily lecture presentations to more frequent give-and-take discussions.

The Summer Resource Labs also inducted the faculty members into the process of formulating academic goals, devising methods of working toward those goals, and creating an adequate

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[9]*Changing Tasks and Roles in Higher Education* (Sherman, Texas: Austin College, 1976). p. 99.

process of evaluation. Thus, when career development procedures called for a similar approach to projects for professional self-improvement, the faculty members were not disconcerted as though confronted by strange demands.

As the comprehensive curriculum revision increased demands upon faculty time, the establishment of a clear-cut Career Development Program seemed imperative. The program as designed, required teachers to re-examine their own professional goals against the background of the objectives of their discipline within the College. Those designing this experience realized that the process might be traumatic for some faculty members, particularly for those of long-time service who might feel threatened or, at the other extreme, those freshly employed. Accordingly, a longtime respected peer, a professor of education and psychology, was engaged to be counselor and adviser and to serve as a resource person for faculty members struggling with their projections.

The establishment of the Career Development Program provided the means for continuing faculty renewal. It institutionalized the concept and processes of the Sumer Resource Laboratory and assured faculty development into the future.

The Career Development Program

Basic to the Austin College Career Development Program is its comprehensive involvement of every member of the faculty and administration. Even the President discusses his career development plans with a committee of trustees. The system is founded on the understanding that development is a mutual responsibility: The faculty member must project a continuous program of self-renewal, and the College must offer opportunities for support.

Faculty members encounter this concept of responsibility for continuous self-renewal at the time they are interviewed for possible appointment. The two or three outstanding candidates for an open faculty position are brought to the campus for a two-day visit. They talk with potential colleagues, become acquainted with the educational objectives of the College, and note the

challenges of the open position. On the application they state their professional and personal objectives and evaluate whether they believe such objectives are appropriate to the nature of Austin College, as observed in their brief visit. Thus the individual is made aware of the intended cooperation between the College and the individual toward mutual goals.

During the second year at the College the teacher is encouraged to sketch tentatively a long-range plan for professional development, and to discuss the plan with a divisional dean who is the career development advisor for faculty within the division. The plan developed by the individual is not rigid and may be freely altered as the years progress, but the act of continuity in planning becomes a part of the process.

All teachers, whether tenured or not, prepare at four-year intervals a negotiated statement of career plans and aspirations for continued professional development, with emphasis on their role as an effective teacher and faculty member during the period ahead. "Negotiated" means that the teacher discusses possibilities with the divisional dean to assure that proposals are feasible within the mutual objectives of the College and teacher. The teacher is to take the lead, with the dean serving more as a consultant than as a judge.

Proposals for projects to implement the plans may be made at any time during the year. Thus, discussions of career improvement are likely to be frequent between the teacher and the divisional dean. The process necessitates the setting of long-range and intermediate goals and the projection of steps toward their accomplishment. The dean and the faculty member sit down at least once a year to consider the faculty member's situation, aspirations, types of programs in which he or she is particularly interested, and possible avenues of self-renewal. Implicit in the process is the commitment of the College to support self-renewal efforts to the limit that such support is available.

Informality and flexibility characterize procedures regarding these periodic self-renewal reports. As a tentative guide, faculty members are asked to describe their present responsibilities in the College, to suggest improvements that may be desirable in their academic field as taught at the

college, and to set forth their own short-range and long-range goals for professional improvement.[4]

Typical career development projects for which the College has provided a financial support vary greatly. A sampling of approved self-improvement projects demonstrates the diversity opened to the Austin College faculty.

Study Leaves: Leaves have been granted for research, writing, teaching experience elsewhere, travel in the United States or abroad, and carrying out of a designated study program on an independent basis. Such leaves may be for the summer, the one-month January Term, a seven-week fall session, a long term (fourteen weeks), or the whole academic year.

A sampling of such grants for leaves:

— A summer grant for a teacher of modern languages and literatures for study and travel in Spain, Italy, Portugal, and Germany.
— Leave for the fall term for a member of the sociology faculty to take three courses in criminology at a university noted for its programs in this field and to continue additional independent study on the sociology of crime.
— A semester leave of absence with salary to a faculty member in English to write a book on the teaching of freshman English.

Attendance at Conferences, Workshops, Seminars: Short-term meetings extending from three days to a month have become a vital method of intense interchange regarding new methods, information, and insights in almost every field subject to educational treatment. The Career Development Program has increased attendance at such sessions by Austin College faculty members. Typical examples include financial support to permit:

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[4]Dan Bedsole and DeWitt C. Reddick, "An Experiment in Innovation: The Faculty Development Program at Austin College," *Liberal Education*, 64 (March, 1978), 78.

— A dean to attend the six-week Institute for Educational Management at Harvard University.
— A faculty member of the Music Department to attend a three-day National Consortium for Computer-Based Musical Instruction, held in Minneapolis.
— An economics and business administration faculty member to visit and study nuclear plants under construction or in proposal stages; and then to attend conferences on the use of nuclear energy.

January Term Experiences: Austin College, like many other colleges, uses the month of January for innovative studies in depth, both on campus and away from the campus. The January Term, therefore, provides opportunities for the self-renewal of faculty as well as for unusual experiences by students. Career development funds lend financial support for faculty participation in such ventures. A few examples from a recent January Term illustrate the potential value to students and likewise the contribution to the faculty member's teaching competence in the field of the venture:

— A professor who teaches a course in the history of Russia but who had never been to Russia conducted a study tour of students into Russia to trace the route of the Soviet revolutionary army in the 1917 revolution.
— A teacher of music supervised a group of students on a trip to England where they studied trends of music.
— A biology teacher took a group of ten juniors from the pre-med program at Austin College to the University of Texas Medical School in Galveston where the students attended regular medical school classes and participated in a special seminar.

Other Creative Activities: The flexibility of the Career Development Program lends itself to a wide variety of aids for professional improvement of the faculty. Examples:

— Some were given financial aid to complete work on an advanced degree.
— One was provided with assistance in revision of learning modules for a course.

— An art teacher made a 14-day journey into the mountainous country of West Texas to gather materials for a series of "story-paintings," art work that combines the visual with the narrative; on the trip he shot hundreds of slides from which he can select images to be enlarged and painted.

Preparing Development Proposals

In planning such Career Development projects faculty members have considerable freedom in manner of presentation, degree of formality or informality, and extent of detail. The following two excerpts from such statements of goals are indicative of the variety of projections.

Statement by a faculty member who directs work for potential elementary grade teachers:

> For my self-development a need arises for gaining more knowledge about the conditions which facilitate learning. Attitudinal qualities to enhance my relationships with students must be explored and ultimately achieved . . . My effectiveness as a teacher educator can be enhanced by returning to the elementary school for which we are preparing students. In addition more graduate school work should provide an opportunity for self-related learning of significant material.

From a Humanities teacher (English):

> I see two alternatives as the next step in the development of my career. The first is . . . to seek appointment as Professor of General Humanities or some such title implying broad responsibilities in general studies (rather than in a single department like English). This position would include continuing to teach in the specialty of Early British and European literature, but it would also include major involvement in the College's general studies program (teaching, administration, and research) . . . It would be important for me to deepen my understanding in some fields to keep them from

being needlessly shallow; but I think there is such a thing as a professional level of generalism in an area that encompasses related academic fields. If such a position would seem a possibility, then I would request an early sabbatical in order to review the fields of my greatest interest.

An example report from an art teacher:

> Current trends in art are always our concern, and we try to keep abreast of these and to provide equipment and technical knowledge necessary for the instruction of our students. In recent years art movements have ventured into such areas as work with computers, experimental video art, spray painting, extremely enlarged photographs, work with a variety of plastics in both painting and sculpture, and the use of almost every imaginable material in some combination, from neon and stroboscopic lighting to ropes and seaweed. As a teacher in art I am attempting to be aware of the trends in education in general, and trends in contemporary art education.
>
> One of my objectives has been to spend some time in Egypt in order to improve my working knowledge of Egyptian art. I have built up my working knowledge of Mexican art through three January trips to Mexico and to the Yucatan Peninsula area. Travel is a major educational enhancement for the person who teaches art, and especially Art History. In particular, I need a refresher trip to Europe, covering the Low Countries, France, Germany, and Italy.

Evaluation in Career Development

One of the essential elements in the Career Development Program is a sound, useful approach to evaluation, There are two distinct categories of evaluation, both of which are integral parts of a total approach to ongoing and systematic evaluation: formative evaluation and summative (or performance) evaluation.

Formative evaluation is individually designed by the faculty members to improve competencies, skills, and habits and to maintain strengths in those areas in which considerable skill and expertise have already been achieved. Summative evaluation consists of data and information about actual performance and levels of proficiency in all areas of involvement and responsibility; summative evaluation is obtained as input from administrative decisions, such as those on salary, promotions, and tenure.

Areas considered in summative evaluation are listed for the faculty member. This list proves helpful as faculty members do their self-evaluations and then prepare proposals of projects to strengthen their effectiveness and development. No faculty member is expected to provide a major contribution in all areas:

1. Teaching effectiveness
2. Contributions to interdisciplinary programs and College-wide courses
3. Relationships to students inside and outside of class
4. Advising (serving in the mentor role)
5. Research, scholarship, creativity
6. Professional growth, participation in professional organizations
7. Involvement with student activities and campus programs
8. College community government and leadership
9. Program leadership
10. Participation in constituency programs of the College, recruitment, and development efforts
11. Participation in civic affairs, public relations, etc.
12. Overall workload carried

The faculty's role, though, is only part of the Career Development Program — the College also has responsibilities. Implicit in the establishment of the program is the College's pledge to give sizeable support to the program. An obvious role for the College is providing financial support to enable career development proposals to be carried out.

Career development can easily run up high costs. With limited resources, Austin College system of faculty payment — in common with many colleges — spreads over twelve monthly

payments the salary earned in the nine-month session. Summer enrollment in the College is small; therefore only a few faculty members teach in the summer and are paid extra for summer instruction. For the majority of the faculty summer provides opportunities for participation in career development enterprises, such as study in other universities, self-directed study programs, travel associated with courses taught, and other experiences of self-renewal. For participants in summer projects approved for career development, no salary stipends are drawn from career development funds because the regular monthly salary continues from the College budget. Career development funds are called upon for travel and other additional expenses. Similarly, when a faculty member gains approval for a leave of absence for a seven-week session or a term as part of his or her career development plan, the faculty member's salary is continued from the College budget and career development funds are tapped only for expenses. In most such leaves, the faculty member is not replaced for the period of absence. By this process many career development objectives have been accomplished with a limited outlay of funds.

Another responsibility of the College is relating the Career Development Program to other aspects of the faculty member's life at the College. Tenure is an especially crucial issue to confront. Every faculty member, whether tenured or not, is required to participate periodically in preparing written projections for professional improvement. Implicit in the contract agreement between the College and the faculty member is the understanding that each faculty member is to continue his or her efforts at self-renewal and improvement. Failure to do so, under a broad interpretation of the tenure rules, could possibly be grounds for dismissal. The hope is that the process itself will prove so stimulating and so productive for the participant that there will be no failure on the part of a faculty member to continue through the years with proposals for professional development.

From the institution's standpoint, the meshing of the Career Development Program with tenure policies is crucial. With the lack of mobility in higher education today, Austin College faces the possibility of moving toward a 100% tenured faculty, and that situation can be risky. Higher salaries and lack of stimulating "new blood" are two of the main risks. The College is expecting,

however, that the Career Development Program will spark creativity in such a way that obsolescence can be avoided and the educational task of the institution can be accomplished on a high level. Thus, the risks can be offset by constructive approaches in the Career Development Program.

Here is the heart of the College's responsibility in the Career Development Program: to make the program a positive framework for faculty change, not a threatening force. The intent is to turn "evaluation" from a fear-laden process into a constructive stimulus for next steps. The College administration must make sure that the Career Development Program is not just for the benefit of the College but is also advantageous to the faculty member. The faculty member alone cannot bring about these attitudes, but the College can and must.

The Austin College Career Development Program encompasses an effort to meet both institutional and personal needs for the future. It is a supportive design to bring the system and the individual together in a mutually advantageous situation. It is a positive way to deal with changing roles.

Attitudes Toward the Program

For the most part the Austin College faculty view the Career Development Program favorably. As one faculty member expressed it for the ALDP project:

> The trade-off between what I do for the College and what it provides for me in terms of genuine renewal is the best "contracted" approach to the real substance of college teaching imaginable. All the rest about the A. C: faculty's being overused and underpaid is rubbish. (p.12)
>
> Generally faculty interviewed for the ALDP project felt that it (the Career Development Program), potentially, was the strongest safeguard against waning faculty competence, periodic faculty disquiet over commitments to non-disciplinary duties, and the "lock-step" of traditonal full sabbaticals which were out of the question for some faculty and

hardly the most needful kind of renewal for still others. (p.12)

Notwithstanding these positive views, however, some criticisms were also expressed. Some faculty question the " 'grab-the-money-and-run' approaches to project planning on the part of a minority . . ." (p.12).

Another problem was more intense in the early phases of the Career Development Program and now seems to be less of a strain. This problem is the additional workload demanded by the career development processes. Each faculty member must regularly prepare written reports, and divisional deans have to hold individual conferences with faculty in their division each year. These efforts all place additional time demands on faculty already carrying many responsibilities. Despite these demands, however, and the other problems expressed above, the Career Develop.ment Program generally receives support by faculty to a greater degree than other Austin College programs.

Principles Emerging from the Austin College Experience

A career development program is not necessarily the only way to deal with needs for faculty improvement and role changes. Other structures and designs are possible. Regardless of the shape of faculty renewal, however, certain principles seem valid for any enterprise in this area.[5]

1. *To be effective, faculty renewal must benefit both the individual faculty member and the institution.*

The faculty member has individual needs for professional development, and the college has institutional and programmatic needs. Only a program which meshes the meeting of all needs has a good chance of success.

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[5]The first five findings have been summarized in "An Experiment in Innovation," *Ibid.*, pages 75-76.

2. *Responsibility must rest alike on the individual and on the institution.*

The individual must project his or her own development goals, perceive what is needed to move toward those goals, and prepare appropriate proposals. The institution must create an environment friendly toward faculty development and, most important, must harness financial resources to support career development proposals. Furthermore, the institution must sustain the financial support at a fairly constant level, not subject to annual fluctuations.

3. *Evaluation of a faculty member must consider not only competence in teaching but also effectiveness in broader responsibilities of the faculty member.*

Renewal needs to go beyond the teaching aspect of the individual's work to consider the deepening of the individual's grasp of the discipline, increased competency in various roles, understanding of society, and participation in the community of higher learning. New insights in these areas can lead to different teaching approaches.

4. *Recognition of individual differences is crucial.*

Rewards in a career development program should be diverse and flexible to meet differing needs; the focus should not be centered just on the traditional sabbatical or research leave. Similarly, different approaches to development can be beneficial for different individuals.

5. *A process should be established to provide for frequent and uninhibited interchange between the faculty member and administrative leaders regarding career development, discussions that will have continuity through the years.*

Indeed, the human interaction may be the most important part of the whole process. It is the understanding of the needs of both faculty member and institution that can lead to joint efforts of substance.

6. *Goal-setting, implementation procedures, and evaluation can be useful tools for the individual.*

Experience with these processes may be most important for the long term. They can be the important vehicle by which the individual gets to the real task of growth and development.

7. *Change and development for the individual can be painful, and extra resources may be necessary to deal with the pain.*

An understanding person for discussion of ideas can be crucial, especially one trained in human relations. This may be particularly important in the beginning stages and when faculty are considering fundamental role change.

8. *The more holistic the effort is, the greater its chance for success.*

Renewal efforts that are linked to reward systems, professional advancement, tenure, and other similar features make the effort more integral to the faculty member's responsibility. Similarly, it makes the institution more consistent in its dealings and thus causes less confusion for faculty. Moreover, the effort of faculty renewal is strengthened itself.

Chapter V

Governance and Operations: Providing a Framework to Complement the Educational Task

Governance and institutional operations are likely to be the facets of higher education most resistant to change. At the same time, governance and operations provide the framework of power within the institution, determining the deposits of authority, the flow of command, the seats of decision-making and the point of everyday interface for faculty and students.

Therefore, as an institution gears for renewal and aims toward focus on students and learning, thoughtful attention must be given to the patterns of governance and operations to see if the flow of authority, the processes of decision-making, and regular routines are in keeping with the qualities of the environment necessary for the educational program, for the changing tasks and roles of people. If a college or university is to stand in these times for certin values, then the very structure of the institution and its processes of operation must reflect those values.

Yet the governance and operations of a college have suffered for a long time from an inability to support the educational program and philosophy of an institution to the optimum potential. Four problems are inherent in governance and operational structures in higher education.

1. Folklore of traditional academic approaches to the running of an organization.

Two different approaches color the heritage of academic governance and operations. Both have long histories that can be recounted, but both also seem outdated for today's needs.

One traditional approach is the autocratic model. By tradition, twentieth century institutions of higher education in the United States are autocratic in nature; that is, authority is invested in a small group of individuals at the top. Decisions are made at this level, with or without advice from below and frequently contrary to such advice, and are passed down through administrative officers to deans, departmental heads, and faculty, or along another channel through divisional heads, student deans, and subordinate advisers to students. In some universities this autocratic structure is tempered by delegations of authority to faculty senates and departmental officials.

The typical university or college community is divided into "publics," as media personnel would define the segments: (1) the administrative hierarchy from departmental heads through deans, vice-presidents, president, and trustees; (2) faculty, from teaching assistants, through assistant professors, associate professors, visiting professors, holders of endowed chairs, and graduate professors; (3) personnel in the business operation of the institution — accountants, payroll personnel, auditors, business manager, vice-president in charge of financial affairs, and development officer; (4) classified personnel in other than business departments — secretaries, clerks, publication editors, etc; and (5) students, with their student life personnel. Approaches to these differing publics tend to spread out fan-like from the central seat of authority, with a minimum of cross-channel discussions of shared issues and problems. Often chasms open between these publics. Faculty tend to see administrators as adversaries, blocking faculty efforts to enlarge their fields or to secure increases in departmental budgets. Students begin to credit the institution with being "a system" which they must learn to manipulate in order to gain rewards.

The second traditional approach is the collegiate model. It is a kind of town hall method in which the faculty is relied on

to run the institution. This approach dates from earlier times when governing boards were primarily honorary bodies looking after an eleemosynary institution, exempt from liability under the law. "Running" the institution was a matter of looking after a few departments, which faculty could do. Today the residue from this approach is a style of faculty collegiality to settle issues and problems.

Both of these models, autocratic and collegiate, ignore the growing complexities of institutional life in today's society and the demands on higher education institutions. Inherent in the two models is a presumption of simpler times and looser expectations, a presumption that is folklore in the current milieu and that makes focus on students and learning a matter of chance, depending on the attitudes of the people involved.

2. *Failure to apply, as appropriate, techniques of sound management and organizational development.*

The days of the casual operation of a college or university are over. The needs of the institution itself and the government both demand accountability. Higher education has long told business and industry how to get things done, but too often has failed to apply similar concepts to its own circumstances.

One important feature of organizational development should be a series of processes for continuous adaptation. Institutions must be geared to rapid adaptation, wisely shaped for the long-range future rather than faddish variations of the present. But the structures of a typical college or university seem designed to change only slowly if at all. Knowledge, combined with the act of learning about knowledge, has been sliced up into traditional academic disciplines. To insert a new academic field becomes expensive and difficult, and the effort encounters opposition from established disciplines whose adherents must share their resources with the new field. Education for college teaching is designed to prepare individuals for instruction in these established fields, perpetuating the lines, forcing new courses to face the handicap of limping without adequate support. If the college is to be geared for continuous change and adaptation, judiciously planned so as to

retain the best of that which has lasting value, an appropriate organization and governance must be devised which will make it possible to break loose from the confinement of traditional compartments as occasions justify.

A more comprehensive aspect of the issue is the need to provide for creativity. When soundly based, creativity becomes a highly desired quality as individuals strive to comprehend the forces of change and to use them rather than be driven by them. Therefore, colleges and universities, especially for these times, need to stimulate creativity among faculty and students. In many ways, however, the processes of higher education tend to reward conformity rather than creativity. In the 1960's, degree patterns too often were frozen into narrow limits, though the 1970's have seen some improvements in this area. Faculty advancement in many institutions depends on adherence to a pattern of research, student teaching evaluations, and years of service. Though a teacher may exercise commendable creativity within the framework of a course, the individual may find difficulty in gaining approval for a new course which differs greatly from departmental patterns. Lock-step progress toward the doctoral degree characterizes many graduate programs. Governance and operations must be designed so as to be alert to impulses of creativity that are soundly based within the broader objectives of the institution.

Management by objectives, sorting out priorities, program planning budgeting systems, systems analysis — all are part of the challenge to higher education institutions. Many college administrators have already taken significant steps to improve organization and management. More progress is needed, however, particularly in the area of adapting business and industrial techniques to the particular nature of the higher education situation.

It is important to remember that the issue is not just management for the sake of management. The educational function is the heart of the matter, and organizational and operational designs must be structured around that central function to support and facilitate it.

3. *Increasing demands for legal and corporate accountability.*

The accountability issue is related to the need for sound management. Demands are growing primarily from the larger social context in which higher education institutions function. The courts, government bureaucracy, legislatures, consumer groups, parents, donors, and others are involved. The courts especially are holding governing boards accountable and forcing boards to function more like the board of directors of a corporation.

How to deal with accountability is a problem which rests heavily on the institution's governing board and top executive leadership. More careful attention to outside forces impinging on the institution must be forthcoming in most colleges and universities.

4. *Psychological and sociological barriers confronting the individual in modern society.*

On all sides the individual is being buffeted with regulations, with forces that leave one feeling powerless and insignificant. Institutions — not just in higher education but throughout all parts of society — seem to be the prime controlling forces of life. The sense of the individual's importance in problem-solving in being attacked.

It is important for colleges and universities to have structures which try to minimize and eliminate these psychological and sociological barriers. The need is not only for the institutions themselves, for the vitality of their own organizations, but also for society and its demands for actively functioning individuals in the future. Education must serve, in part, to restore to the individual a sense of leadership in determining the nature of change.

Austin College Addresses the Problems

The governance and operations of any college involves many different divisions. At Austin College all these divisions have been forged into a unified, interlocking system with the ultimate common goal of enhancing the educational efforts.

The Role of Trustees and the Corporate Function

Ultimate authority and responsibility for the conduct and welfare of Austin College, as with most educational institutions, rest with the Board of Trustees. Assignments of authority and responsibility downward through the structures of the institution, even when established through written documents, remain delegated from this central authority. Leadership, therefore, must emerge also from the Board of Trustees.

Leadership, however, depends on pertinent and accurate information. Like most colleges and universities, Austin College has multiple means to meet this need.

One of the most helpful methods of developing trustee understanding and leadership is the Trustee Workshop. Each summer the Board of Trustees meets for a three-day workshop and examines one basic subject in depth. The subject of the workshop follows a four-year cycle — education, business affairs, development, and executive planning — so that in a four-year period every trustee gets a detailed involvement with the major operational areas of the College. Major committees of the Board parallel these workshop topics — Education, Business Affairs, Development and Executive Planning. For example, one year the Education Committee of the Board will begin planning for the Education Workshop months before the summer begins. Advance materials will be sent to the trustees and other studies readied for presentation to the trustees by faculty and staff involved with educational planning. Participants in the workshop generally include the trustees, executive officers, corporate officers, other administrators, faculty, staff,

and students. For the following three annual workshops the other three trustee committees function in like manner. In the subject matter area, the workshop participants examine and evaluate performance for the previous year, project future possibilities, clarify issues and alternatives, and make possible a sharing of views among trustees, administrative officers, selected faculty members, staff, and students.

Another helpful device is the trustee-in-residence. Several times each year an individual trustee is invited to spend a few days on the campus — from a day or two to a week. The trustee-in-residence participates (generally as an auditor) in a Governing Council meeting. In addition, the schedule of the trustee-in-residence is open for appointments with individual faculty members and students who seek the opportunity for a conversation. The individual appointments are occasions of informal two-way communication. As time permits, the trustee-in-residence may also participate in whatever other activities are in progress, such as faculty meetings or a session with ex-students.

The use of Senior Trustees provides another process for the exchange of information and ideas. The Austin College Board of Trustees is self-perpetuating, selecting members on staggered terms and permitting re-election to the completion of three terms. Thereafter, a trustee may be asked to serve as a "Senior Trustee." This position is in part an honorary one, without vote; yet Senior Trustees, with their accumulated understandings of the College, are invited to attend regular Board meetings, to share insights with newer trustees, to work with development enterprises, and to be ready to represent the College on certain occasions. Some also serve without vote on committees of the Board of Trustees. Not all retiring trustees accept appointment as a Senior Trustee, but considerable benefit has been derived from those who are willing to continue in this service.

Participation in Board meetings and in the other processes described brings individual trustees into close contact with the nature and spirit of the Austin College enterprise and prepares the trustees to accept the responsibilities of leadership. All trustees are aware of the fact that they are legally and cor-

porately accountable for the institution, and they have structured the College to reflect their acceptance of that responsibility. Accordingly, they have clearly delineated matters that must be brought to their attention as distinguished from those matters over which authority has been delegated to other administrative levels. The Board of Trustees *Policy Manual* states the Board's stance on various matters and also describes the organization and structure of the College, indicating matters of concern to the Board and matters delegated to others. The major concerns of the trustees are overall and corporate policies.

The corporate function includes such vital areas as finance, development, legal issues, and the master plan for the physical development of the campus. These and other corporate matters rest heavily upon the Board of Trustees.

The Corporate Office

To help focus attention on these increasingly important matters, the Board has established a Corporate Office to provide the staff work for its handling of the corporate affairs. The Corporate Office is headed by the chief staff officer, who is the Chancellor (or the President), and its primary function is to do the staff work necessary for the Board's decision-making processes in the corporate area. The chief staff officer calls on others as necessary, such as the Assistant President, Treasurer, Secretary of the College, Vice-President for Development, Vice-President for College Relations, and others. Obviously, many of these officials "wear two hats" in that they serve not only as staff to the Board through the Corporate Office, but also as operating heads of divisions of the college. A determined effort is made, however, to delineate clearly the lines of demarcation between the two types of duties.

The organization of the corporate structure is an effort to maintain a clear delineation of responsibilities and a careful accounting in regard to corporate matters. It is a tangible expression of the Board's intention to focus on the legal and

corporate complexities of the college and to deal aggressively with them.

Delegations of Responsibility and the Executive Function

Establishment of the Corporate Office is an effort by the Board of Trustees to make clear designations of the matters requiring their attention. A corollary effort is the delegation to others of operating responsibilities in which the trustees do not need to be closely involved. The chief executive officer carries overall responsibility for the College and reports to the Board of Trustees.

Thus, the trustees stand firm on their ultimate responsibility for the College, but at the same time they bring others into the responsibilities of leadership in implementing policies. The trustees then make clear delegations of responsibilities to these others for areas in which they are most closely involved, reserving for themselves overall and corporate policies. For governance, the delegations are through the chief executive officer to the campus Governing Council and its relationship to Program Units in the Program Management System. For operations, the delegations are through the chief executive officer to the Program Management System (described in detail later in this chapter).

The trustees are concerned with encouraging a high level of review and innovation at specific levels of operation, moving from the "grass roots" upward toward implementation through legislative action by the Governing Council, to be followed in certain measures, by trustee approval. But long-range planning and continual renewal also require coordination and input from an all-college viewpoint and approach. The Executive Office ("Office" is not a place but is an authoritative body) — headed by the President, who is the chief operating officer of the college — is structured to provide this coordination and planning, in addition to serving other significant functions. It consists of the top executives in all divisions of the college, including the Dean of Humanities, Dean of

Sciences, Dean of Social Sciences, Vice President for Business Affairs, Vice President for College Relations, Executive Vice President and Dean of the Faculty, and Secretary of the College.

This use of the top executives as a team is called the "multiple executive concept." It evolved in recognition of the fact that operating a college is so complex that no one person alone can control the entire operation. The best thinking from a variety of perspectives is needed, and the Executive Office provides such an approach.

Structurally, the Executive Office serves as the primary avenue of communication, upward and downward, between the operating divisions of the College and the Board of Trustees. In addition to giving attention to the day-to-day activities under their direction, the members of the Executive Office also provide overall coordination of College activities and attend to certain cross-cutting functions, such as personnel actions; interpretation of policy and recommendations for policy exceptions and policy changes; all-college special events, including convocations, honorary degrees, commencement and homecoming; and special program arrangements with other colleges.

The Governing Council

The typical college or university exercises legislative functions through a hierarchy of departmental faculties, college or divisional faculties, the general faculty, and, in many situations, an elected faculty senate. Non-academic affairs are handled through a separate series of bureaus and offices. Austin College has developed a unique arrangement in the creation of the Governing Council. The unique aspects of the Governing Council are:

— All legislative functions of the College are concentrated in this one body.
— The Governing Council handles both academic and non-academic functions.
— Membership in the Governing Council is made up of

representatives of the faculty, students, staff, and administration — the major segments of the Austin College "community."

Through this type of organization, Austin College accomplishes two important goals: (1) The structure expedites the legislative process, reducing the amount of time for processing recommendations and changes. (2) The structure is a visible demonstration that Austin College regards faculty, students, staff, and administration as citizens of a community with the right of sharing in the total government of that community.

Legislative action by the Governing Council is final except for two classifications of items: (1) If a proposal approved by the Governing Council seems to deviate from established policy or to require funds, facilities, or personnel beyond approved budgets, the legislation must be referred to the Board of Trustees, (2) In situations where classification of a proposal is not obvious, the Executive Vice President (who also serves as Dean of the Faculty) is authorized to make the determination.

Membership in the Governing Council includes the following:

- Six faculty members, two elected annually by the faculty for three-year terms;
- Five students, including the student president and two other students elected annually for two-year terms;
- Four administrators, including ex-officio with vote the Vice-President for Business Affairs, plus three other administrators appointed by the President;
- One staff member, appointed annually by the President;
- To preside at the meetings and to vote only in case of a tie: the Executive Vice-President and Dean of the faculty (one person);
- Three non-voting members: the President, the Secretary of the College, and a trustee-in-residence.

All members are responsible for making decisions on the basis of what is best for Austin College rather than simply voting for what is best for a particular constituency.

By this process the faculty shares responsibility with

students, staff, and administrators in major decisions involving curriculum and academic procedure, whereas in most colleges the faculty dominate in such decisions. The faculty of Austin College displayed considerable uneasiness as the system was under consideration. Therefore, provision was made for an elected Faculty Review and Advisory Committee to review matters of faculty concern which are or should be brought before the Governing Council. (The duties of this committee will be described later in this chapter.) A similar student advisory group, the Student Program Committee, functions to review Governing Council actions which affect students.

The functions of the Governing Council are broad and diverse. Scanning the minutes of the Council meetings over an academic year, one finds such topics of discussion and legislation as the following:

— Review of materials related to the general goals and objectives of the College;
— Proposed changes in the procedures of the Honor Council;
— Abuses of the Lake Campus by outside groups and measures taken to prevent such abuses;
— Revision of Health Center policies;
— Revision in requirements for summer-time living in residence halls and off-campus;
— Recommendations for Convocation programs and principles governing such programs;
— Evaluation and self-study of the role and functions of the Governing Council;
— Development of summer programs on campus for special groups, workshops, seminars;
— Development of cooperative program with the local public schools;
— Changes in student orientation procedures;
— Identification of priority items for legislation and the staff work that must be done in relation to such legislation;
— Biology program and catalogue changes related thereto;
— Action on the yearly calendar;
— Involvement of women in sports and physical activity programs;

— Guidelines for renewal of trustees' merit scholarships for individual students;
— Level of performance required of students in courses used to complete a concentration.

This random sampling from minutes of Council meetings suggests the variety of subject matter which arises at Governing Council meetings. Matters may be brought before the Governing Council by program directors, program executives, members of the administration, faculty members through the agency of the Faculty Review and Advisory Committee, and students through the Student Program Committee. The Governing Council agenda is divided into three parts — legislation, information, and questions and inquiries — and thus issues may be handled in different ways, depending on the nature of the particular matter.

The Program Management System

A college or university houses a variety of dissimilar operations — academic departments, interdisciplinary programs, adult education schools, business offices, research divisions, library functions, communication systems. A general variety of dissimilar procedures are followed in the administration of these entities.

Austin College, borrowing a system from business, has turned to the "grass roots" unit of each of these functions, placing each under a similar management structure with an open two-way communication channel to the single legislative body (the Governing Council) and to key administrators at or near the top. The result aims for (1) efficiency in management, (2) equality of treatment, (3) built-in processes of renewal, and (4) the streamlining of bureaucracy. The system will be described later in this chapter, but first the steps in the development of the program will be noted.

Development of the Program

In July, 1975, Austin College received a two-year grant from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation to help complete the design for and to install a new system for program management. The decision to install a new system of program management coincided in timing with the regular ten-year self-study for re-accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. Austin College requested and gained approval for a non-traditional self-study which would combine the creation of the new system and the evaluations needed for review by the Southern Association.

The problem faced with this undertaking was described in a report prepared by Dr. Jack Carlson, Dean of Humanities at Austin College:

> Ironically, most colleges and universities offer a variety of courses, seminars, and special programs in effective business management yet fail to manage their own educational enterprises very successfully. Traditionally, in academe we have neither effectively practiced what we have taught about good management, nor translated that knowledge about business into appropriate standards for the different world of education.
>
> Two reasons for this are apparent. First, the academic atmosphere attracts and fosters the independent spirit. Individuality and freedom, essential to academic life, may work in opposition to group goals and concerted effort, essential in good management. Even the very word "management" has unpleasant connotations for many academicians . . .
>
> Second, most educators are not managers by either training or disposition. Moreover, most do not regard managerial training competence as a primary professional goal. Few educators even think of themselves as having serious management responsibilities, though they may be charged with organizing and operating instructional programs involving large sums of money, hundreds of students, and numbers of fellow educators.

Despite these obstacles, those at Austin College felt the only real hope for new and meaningful management would come through involvement of faculty and students in that management. Also, it is at the point of program operations that the educational philosophy and goals of the College will either come alive or wither. Management and operations that provided significant roles for faculty and staff were thus mandated.

Escape from the traditional compartmentalization within colleges was made by recognizing each definable area of activity within the College as a Program Unit. The nature of the units differ, as for example an academic department (History), a College-wide curricular program (Heritage of Western Culture), an educational support service (the Computer Center), or a business support service (the Finance Office). Forty-seven Program Units were defined in the first years of operation, and a few more have since been added.

Each Program Unit has a Director who holds responsibility for the Program Unit. The Director has an Advisory Committee composed of faculty, students, and staff. The Committee is only advisory to the Director and serves as a resource to the Director as responsibilities are carried out.

The Program Director's responsibilities include the everyday management of the Program Unit and the creative development of the program activity to meet changing needs. The Director identifies resources needed each year by the Program Unit — both human and monetary — and then manages the resources to carry out the program activity. All this is done within the framework of yearly and quadrennial goal-setting and evaluation, a most important part of the Program Management System.

Program Units in similar areas are grouped together as a Division headed by a Program Executive. The Program Executive is the constant resource for the Program Director and the adjudicator among competing demands between different Program Units. The Program Executive works closely with the Program Director to help formulate and carry out goals. The Executive also is the Director's bridge to the institutional needs and goals of the entire College.

In terms of renewal and creativity, the Program Director

is responsible for formulating proposals for improvement, change, addition, or deletion of elements of the program under the Director's jurisdiction; but the idea for the proposal may be initiated by any member of the Program Unit's working force or Advisory Committee. Once the proposal is prepared, there is no veto barrier between the initiating Unit and consideration by the Governing Council, the College's legislative body. However, to insure consideration of various implications of the proposal, the document is submitted for review to the Executive of the Division. The Executive exercises no veto power but is authorized to assess the impact of the proposal on the College-wide program, to consider budgetary and personnel requirements of the proposal to see if they can be accommodated within the current resources of the Division, and to offer suggestions for improvement of the proposal.

After considering the comments of the Executive, the Program Director can forward the proposal in one of two directions: (1) If the proposed change concerns only a modification in the internal operation of the Program Unit without additional funds beyond those of the Unit or authorized by the Executive from Divisional funds, no further approval is necessary. The Director may implement it. (2) If the proposed change calls for a deviation from established policy, affects other Program Units, or requires additional resources beyond those already authorized for the Program Unit, the proposal, with appropriate documentation, must be submitted to the Governing Council. Thus, the Program Management System places much of the responsibility for creative planning upon the Program Unit. Proposals arising in the Program Unit may move swiftly from the Director, with comment from the Divisional Executive, either into implementation, if involving minor changes, or for prompt consideration by the Governing Council.

To help coordinate the activities of the Program Management System, the Executive Office uses the Administrative Secretariat. The Secretariat consists of a small group of executives and serves coordinating, communicating, and implementing functions related to actions of the Governing Council and Program Units. It exercises no veto power over any item.

Examples of duties include:

- Recording or documenting changes made in programs and Program Units and communicating such changes to the College community;
- Making assignments to task forces and committees to insure that essential planning and staff work related to proposed legislative items are completed;
- Reviewing proposed changes in policies and programs to determine which items require legislative approval (through the Governing Council) and then seeing that each legislative item is properly prepared for presentation.

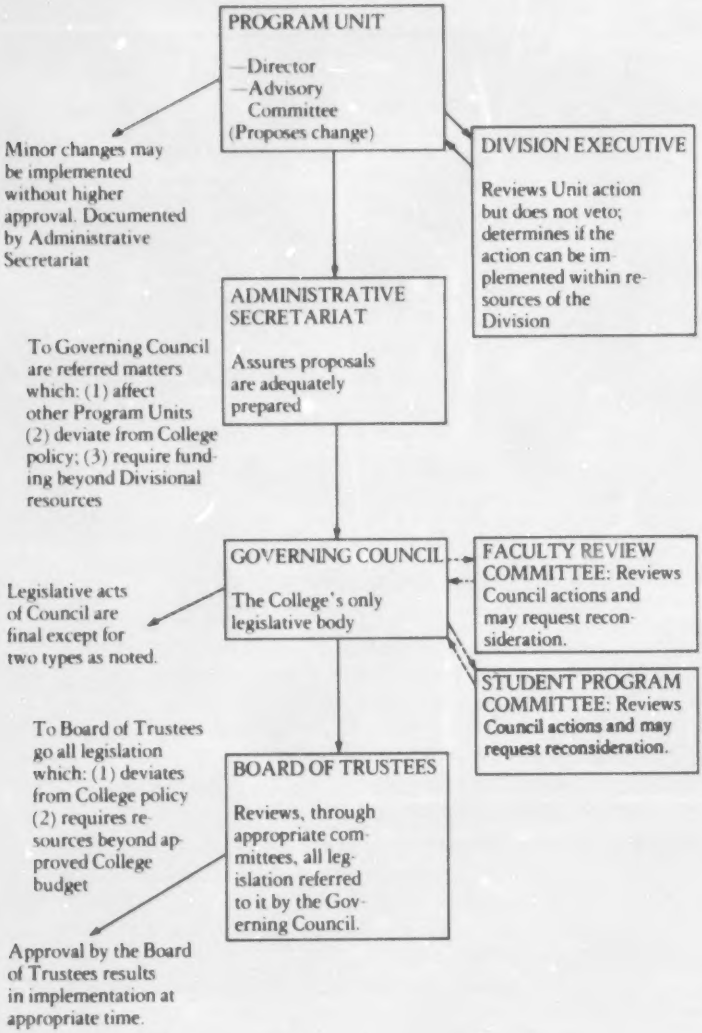
The functioning of the Program Management System as a whole is depicted on the next page. Program Directors, Advisory Committees, Division Executives, Governing Council, Board of Trustees — all and more are involved. A complete description of the governance and operations of the College is published regularly in the Operational Guide, including details about procedures of everyday operations and ways to change procedures when necessary.

The Role of the Faculty

Questions may arise from observers about the relative strength of faculty opinion under the new structure as compared with the traditional academic structure. Does the decision-making process about curriculum, shared between faculty and some representation from students and staff, decrease the effectiveness of faculty influence? Does the elimination of a faculty legislative body through combination in the Governing Council of faculty, administrators, students and staff detract from the central importance of faculty concerns? Is sensitivity to curriculum diminished through the fact that the legislative agenda of the single legislative body in the College includes all matters that need legislating — curricular, student life, business and policy?

The most important advantage of the Program Management System is that it places the incentive for creativity at the

EDUCATIONAL INNOVATION UNDER THE PROGRAM MANAGEMENT SYSTEM


PROGRAM UNIT
—Director
—Advisory Committee
(Proposes change)
Minor changes may be implemented without higher approval. Documented by Administrative Secretariat
DIVISION EXECUTIVE
Reviews Unit action but does not veto; determines if the action can be implemented within resources of the Division
ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARIAT
Assures proposals are adequately prepared
To Governing Council are referred matters which: (1) affect other Program Units (2) deviate from College policy; (3) require funding beyond Divisional resources
GOVERNING COUNCIL
The College's only legislative body
Legislative acts of Council are final except for two types as noted.
FACULTY REVIEW COMMITTEE: Reviews Council actions and may request reconsideration.
STUDENT PROGRAM COMMITTEE: Reviews Council actions and may request reconsideration.
To Board of Trustees go all legislation which: (1) deviates from College policy (2) requires resources beyond approved College budget
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Reviews, through appropriate committees, all legislation referred to it by the Governing Council.
Approval by the Board of Trustees results in implementation at appropriate time.

level of greatest faculty activity — the Program Unit. It provides a speedy process for implementing innovative proposals. In answer to the questions posed above, supporters for establishing the Program Management System maintained that sound curricular proposals would be strenthened through the sharing process in the early stages of conception, incorporating views of students and staff with those of faculty. Faculty members would still maintain a balance of numbers in the formation of these proposals in the Program Units devoted to curricular fields. Though the faculty would not comprise the majority in the Governing Council, they nevertheless would be strongly represented.

The Faculty Review and Advisory Committee furnishes another channel for exerting strong faculty influence. This Committee consists of six members, as follows: three faculty members elected on a staggered basis for three-year terms chosen to provide continuous representation of the Social Sciences, the Natural Sciences, and the Humanities; a representative of the graduate studies; a faculty representative at large elected on a staggered basis for two-year terms; and a chairperson, the Dean of the Faculty, without vote except in case of a tie.

The Faculty Review and Advisory Committee serves as a "watchdog" on Governing Council actions and may ask the Council for reconsideration or may appeal to the President. In addition, members of the Committee, learning in advance of matters to come before the Governing Council, may bring the matters before the faculty at a meeting for discussion either before or after Council action. The committee likewise serves as advisor to the President on matters related to faculty or curriculum, with the right of initiating such conversations.

Meetings of the whole faculty continue to be held regularly and serve as a forum for discussion of significant issues of concern to the whole College or to individual Program Units, but these meetings have no legislative functions. The six faculty representatives to the Governing Council are in the position of reporting faculty opinion to the Council and of explaining Council actions to the faculty. Pre-school faculty meetings, held for three days prior to the fall semester, provide

opportunities for presentations by the President, Dean of the Faculty, Registrar, and other officials concerning the year ahead, and for the discussion of policies and curriculum. Faculty meetings of one hour or so in length are held monthly. Topics recently discussed at typical mid-winter faculty meetings included approval of candidates for graduation, discussion of the reorganization of the Computer Center, reports on recent gifts to the College and purposes for which the gifts were to be used, discussion of methods for facilitating grants through the Career Development Program, and discussion of a report from a faculty committee to study aspects of the freshman year.

Thus, with the Program Management System, Austin College has forged various components into one system that stimulates creativity but also has reasonable checks and balances. As one trustee reported during the final review of the installation process of the Program Management System:

> The Program Management System is something that most of us can examine; we can question and look at; and in my case I feel like Moses — I feel like taking off my shoes and turning aside to see this marvelous thing . . . what we have here is a Program Management System that puts faculty and students together at the place education is manufactured — what is called . . . the "program unit," which corresponds roughly to departments but is not synonymous with departments in entirety . . .
>
> This Program Management System is a rather ingenious scheme, and it seems to me at any rate, to pick up the virtues of management at the level where the people are involved in the enterprise and work with it. Creativity is encouraged because you have discussion among people who are concerned about the enterprise at that point. But it avoids the basic pitfall of that form of organization that I have seen other places and the reason it has not operated very well or has been abandoned as soon as it has been tried is because people began to feel a lot of freedom — "Gee, we run this enterprise at this level" — and then they will do some peculiar or foolish thing

because they have the authority and no check or balance or surveillance or review.

In this Austin College scheme there is a very interesting check and balance system built throughout the system so that you do get creativity . . . at least, shall we say, surveying it as an outsider it seems to me it is a rather ingenious system of allowing creativity and encouraging creativity, an interesting response to education. But at the same time there is responsibility built into the system right on up to the group that makes the policies.

We did, in fact, look at some of the reviews. One of them had to do with the Biology program and on page 10 of that report you will find under critical concerns the faculty and students working on that report begin to talk about "areas of their dreams" and, you see, it is that characteristic of dreaming — of imagination — that leads to innovation and I think we have something very interesting and rather unique in this system.

Results of Changes in Governance

Before undertaking a total institutional renewal, Austin College had a governance system similar in most respects to that of other small colleges. The faculty and administration generally controlled degree patterns and curriculum changes. Significant changes had to be legislated upward through three or four bodies. Student life remained in a separate compartment. Business and academic operations, while flowing generally in separate channels, intermingled here and there.

The reorganized system of governance made significant shifts of authority and procedure.

— The new organization creates a sharing of responsibilities on a "community" basis — faculty, students, and administrators entering into decision making at every level.

— The new organization simplifies the process for securing action by centering major decisions in one legislative body, delegating authority for minor decisions to lower level administration, and thus increasing the speed by which approved proposals may be implemented.
— There is a shift in structure, under the Program Management System, whereby Program Units are identified at the smallest coherent functioning level, and by this device innovation and creativity may more easily be recognized and supported.
— The new organization clarifies distinctions between operational and corporate functions, thus establishing procedures to respond more readily to new challenges of accountability.

These results, however, have not all been received enthusiastically. Some faculty, and even some outside evaluators visiting the College, question the perceived loss of faculty power in legislation of curriculum. There are those who see the change in the traditional role of the faculty as a loss. As one faculty member reported in the ALDP project, "Individual faculty members can do most anything, but the faculty as a whole can do almost nothing." (pp. 12-13)

Implementing such a different approach encountered serious problems in communication and understanding which still linger. In the ALDP report, a faculty administrator stated:

> Governance *is* a problem at A. C., but *not* because the new procedures are "wrong" or "unfair" or "inadequate" — rather because many faculty members still think of it that way, have not really accepted the break with tradition it represents, and give little thought to its long-term advantage to A. C.'s total approach to its programs and to those served by them. (p. 13)

Gaining and maintaining faculty understanding and support of the governance and program management operations no doubt will be a continuing concern.

Principles Emerging from the Austin College Experience

The experiences of Austin College in reorganizing its system of governance may provide some helpful insights for administrators elsewhere. Understandably, each institution has distinctive situations so that adaptations would have to be made accordingly. However, herewith are a few suggestions that emerge from the Austin College experience.

1. *Where possible, steps should be taken to speed up the process by which changes may be proposed, evaluated, and implemented.*

The time-lag between the emergence of a new idea for curriculum change and the implementation of that change in most academic institutions has been a major deterrent to creativity. Austin College increased the speed of change by consolidating legislative action into one body, by delegating authority over minor changes to lower levels of administration, and by reducing the time required for approval.

2. *Goal-setting, implementation, and evaluation are most helpful when they can be established as routine and regular procedures throughout the units of the institution.*

Customary practice in colleges requires each college division to prepare budget projections annually. Enlarging this practice to require evaluation of the preceding year and goal projection for the future is a helpful change.

3. *Strategic use of student participation in decision-making can be crucial.*

There were some misgivings when Austin College embarked upon its practice of going beyond token student participation to including numbers of students in curriculum decisions through the Summer Resource Laboratories, including five students as

voting members of the Governing Council, and inviting student opinions for consideration in Program Unit decisions. Several years of experience, however, have demonstrated the benefits. Students have responded with maturity and have made significant contributions with their insights. In addition, exposure to the functioning operations of higher education has in itself made more discerning students of the young men and women participating in the decisions.

4. *Some adaptation of the Program Management System may prove advantageous to any college.*

In a typical college or university the very system of governance itself tends to pit units against each other in the struggle for resources, and those units with less visibility frequently suffer. Interdepartmental courses or programs tend to be squeezed in favor of departmental offerings. The Program Management System provided for Austin College the vehicle for classifying the various Program Units, whether academic or non-academic, at the "grass roots" level of operation. The Directors of each of these Units have equal accessibiity to present ideas and requests to the one legislative body — the Governing Council. Innovative ideas have little chance of being squelched within a larger Unit before they secure a hearing which will consider the idea against the development of the whole institution.

5. *The clear-cut separation of functions and the specific fixing of responsibility can reduce misunderstandings and tensions.*

Any person who has worked in large and sometimes cumbersome organizations, such as — by their very nature — institutions of higher education are likely to be, has encountered situations in which dissension has arisen through misunderstanding of the authority and responsibility assigned to various levels of administration. At the overall level, Austin College has delineated a separation of fields of authority and function through creating the Executive Office and the Corporate Office, as explained earlier in this chapter. In like manner an effort has been

made to place in the hands of all faculty members and staff a description of duties and responsibilities associated with each position and each body.

6. *A necessary management tool is a published handbook or policy manual which clearly defines policies and procedures, including procedures for bringing about changes.*

Clear understanding by all participants is essential for smooth operations, and written documents help to achieve that understanding. An important part of that communication must be the way to change policies and procedures, to change the system if another way promises better results.

7. *The process of placing responsibility for a particular Program Unit on one individual and assigning an Advisory Committee of faculty and students to work with that individual has proved effective.*

By this arrangement, the process of change has increased in speed, as the individual may act more quickly than can be a accomplished in seeking a committee consensus. On the other hand, the Advisory Committee provides a channel through which opinions of others may influence the decisions of the Director. The Director's decision may agree or differ from that of individual members of the committee. The Director is held responsible for his/her decision.

8. *Sharing, openness, and team approaches to all of the problems and issues of governance of the college community can significantly strengthen the spirit of "community within a college."*

The governance changes in Austin College, as described in this chapter, permit students to share with faculty in curriculum decisions. Though faculty influence in curriculum decisions may seem to be diluted, faculty participation in decision-making in other areas is broadened through participation in many non-curricular affairs. Students participate in decisions regarding student life and conduct, but also participate in curricular and program

decisions at many levels. The central idea sought by Austin College is to envision a college community in which all individuals — faculty, students, staff, administrators — consider themselves citizens of the community, with citizenship responsibilities; and the organization of governance is intended to give support to this concept.

Chapter VI

New Dimensions in Constituency Relations

The need for a close relationship between an institution and its constituency is strong today. Many factors are involved. There are growing public debates about whether a college education is essential. Costs are booming and at the same time financial sources are shrinking. The squeeze for enrollment is beginning and promises to intensify in the years ahead. All these factors are impelling institutions to work carefully with constituency.

Yet there are other factors even more important, factors less related to today's outside pressures exerted on the college or university and more closely connected to the institution's fundamental mission and educational purposes. These are continuing concerns, and they can be stated in terms of problems facing constituency programs today.

1. *Tendency to think of constituency relationships in outdated terms.*

It used to be said that it was enough to think of and serve the constituency in two ways. First, the constituency was served by the institution's offering a traditional educational program of four years. This was indeed the fundamental connection of the institution with the constituency.

Second, the constituency was served in a secondary way by being supported and honored by the college as alumni and alumnae. The graduates got to enjoy the prestige and pride of associations with the institution. Some of this meaning is wrapped up in the term "alma mater." The institution, of course, counted on receiving support in return, primarily money.

Another term, increasingly recognized today, signifies as much as anything the shortcomings of this old concept of constituency relationship. That term is "lifelong learning." More and more it is assumed that education for an individual will continue far beyond the traditional four-year college experience, extending even thoughout one's lifetime. This trajectory of educational involvement for the individual creates a new dimension of mutual concern between college and constituency.

Lifelong learning and focus on students — together they are a catalyst for a new approach for institutions in terms of constituency relationship. The continuing learning experiences of the individual becomes an obligation of the college and an opportunity for the member of the constituency. The college or university can be a resource to the individual both for changing careers and for keeping current on general matters. This kind of reference point is demanded by society's needs and almost mandated for an institution emphasizing continuing learning for students.

2. *Failure to recognize more subtle needs that constituency relationships can help meet.*

Too often constituency relationships are viewed as a mutually satisfying relationship on a fairly superficial level. The college or university hopes to provide some special events and reunion-type experiences that its graduates can enjoy, and in return for such experiences and a basic loyalty for the four-year education previously received, the institution hopes to receive help from the graduates, particularly in the areas of fund-raising and student recruitment.

These aspects of constituency relationships have been

valuable and certainly will continue to be so in the future. Similarly, the two-way mutual benefits of the relationship are important, necessary, and worthy of continuation.

But there is a deeper level of benefit, of attraction of the two parties to one another. For the individual constituent, a relationship with a college or university can be a means to work on societal problems and the needs of the world, a handle for one to fight for the beliefs he or she holds. For example, one devoted to a strong independent sector in this country can express that devotion through a relationship with an independent college or university. In these days of massiveness and alienation, a constituency relationship can offer a force to identify with and a vehicle for involvement.

For the college or university, constituency relationships can mean more than just a connection to potential students and financial resources. A more fundamental contribution is the help the constituency can give, in a programmatic sense, to assist the institution in carrying out its mission.

3. *Lack of attention to identifying the constituency.*

Too often an institution seems to assume its constituency is a narrow group. Graduates and former students are often focused on most closely. Others who enter the picture secondarily include residents in the surrounding area, parents of students, donors, and those related particularly to an individual institution, such as members of a certain denomination in the case of a church-related college or university.

Rapidly, then, an institution's constituency can grow to a sizeable number. In a widespread constituency there are different levels of relationships. Some individuals are passionately committed and deeply interested. Others have different concerns in their lives and little time or inclination to work with the institution. One approach for the college or university, therefore, must be to identify those most interested in the institution and to make clear what are the services the college can provide these individuals. This group of constituents can be the ones the institution focuses on most intently.

In seeking loyalty from constituents, the institution has

tended in the past to stress the needs of the College. Today, in addition, strong effort must be made to identify the constituency's needs. The college must try to meet these changing needs within the framework of its own goals. If it does not try to make this connection, the institution may suffer from having a program and activities that hold no relevance for those outside supporters.

Austin College Addresses the Problems

Like many institutions, Austin college has long had programs and activities directed toward its constituency. Alumni awards and annual fund drives in the surrounding community are but two examples.

In recent years, however, different dimensions to the constituency relationship have been built. Founded as a college of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, Austin College has poineered the contemporary expression of church-relatedness through a covenant. The covenant is a statement of the mutual responsibilities of one to the other, of common concerns both wish to advance.

Regardless of the specifics mentioned in the covenant, it represents a significant attempt by college and church working together to design strategies that meet the needs of both. Through the covenant, the College has moved toward better identification and understanding of this part of its constituency. A similar approach has been adopted for other parts of the constituency program and is applicable to any college or university, church-related or not.

Regional Relationships and Organization

A structural framework based on a regional concept has been established. In essence, Austin College is going where its constituents are to meet them on their own ground and gain understanding about them.

A regional office for the College is located in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. Through it the College provides coverage of Texas, the geographical source of approximately 85% of its students. This regional office serves not only the particular metropolitan area but also others in the state as well. Thus, smaller towns and rural areas are also considered important parts of the College's geographic region.

This regional office is a contact point between the constituents and the College. In addition, the office and its staff mobilize the constituency for fund-raising, student recruitment, and other activities related to the College. This mobilization does not mean merely solicitation of individuals or of the regional constituency as a whole. Instead, it encompasses broader purposes, with the office serving as a stimulus and in a support role to get members of the constituency working with one another. The regional office can fulfill a valuable function in marshalling the constituency and getting meaningful involvement in these activities.

Also staff members of the regional office can communicate to the College the needs and concerns of the constituency. Because staff are continually in the field and in immediate contact with constituents, there can be greater understanding than is possible only by long distance when a constituency program is operated through an office on the central campus. This two-way contact between constituency and College is an important, perhaps the most important function of the regional concept.

The Advocate Program

Still in the process of being established, the Advocate Program is a means to involve members of the constituency in certain activities on an individual basis. The aim is to foster a positive, continuing framework in which an individual can relate to the College instead of having just an occasional involvement when the College needs help in fund-raising or student recruitment.

The operation of the Advocate Program is simple. An individual member of the constituency is invited to become an

Austin College Advocate. Becoming an Advocate is expression of the person's commitment to the College and what it is about. By being an Advocate, the constituent agrees to advocate the College, to speak or act in its favor.

The expression of that advocacy will take many different forms, depending on the desires and interests of the individual. Being an Advocate may entail visiting the parents of a high school student who is considering Austin College and discussing the College with them. It may mean helping to initiate or arrange for a performance by the College's A Cappella Choir in a local church. It may mean helping in the regional office on a volunteer basis for special events. It may mean working with trustees and staff to call on a local member of the community to consider Austin College in his or her will. The possibilities for involvement are numerous, and the Advocate can easily shape them to personal preference.

But the College also recognizes that Advocates require a sure understanding of the College in order to be meaningfully involved. Accordingly, extra communication efforts will be made to provide that understanding. Advocates will be placed on a special mailing list to receive additional information besides that sent to all members of the constituency.

The College reaps benefits from the activities of Advocates, but that is not the only reason for the program. In a more fundamental sense, the Advocate Program provides a way for persons to stand up for beliefs they share in common with the College, to support those beliefs in other than financial ways. Liberal arts education, the independent sector, the mission of the church in society, the advancement of knowledge, concern for sensitive treatment of the individual — these and many other phrases can be used to indicate some idea or worthy cause that a person may wish to support through service as an Advocate and thus have an impact on society. This service in the cause of a belief that extends beyond Austin College is an important part of the Advocate Program.

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Constituency Advisory Committees

Another valuable area in which the constituency helps Austin College is through regular review of certain programs and the making of suggestions to improve the programs. This assistance is one expression of the College's goal to stay in tune with the needs of society and of those the College serves.

Traditionally the trustees of an institution have been the primary link between the institution and the outside world. Ordinarily trustees are drawn from avenues of society other than education — leaders in business, professions other than teaching, civic-minded persons who have displayed ability in community organization. If well chosen — as generally is true — they are in a strategic position to interpret the needs of society to the college, and to interpret the achievements and needs of the college to the external facets of society. Increasingly, though, more complex matters are occupying trustees, such as complicated legal issues and other corporate affairs.

The constituency is a natural ally to help in linking the college and its programs to the needs of society and of those served by the college. Austin College began implementing this approach, in a very rudimentary way, during the OPENS period (see Chapter III). Then, when a new educational program was being designed, the staff of the College went to graduates in various parts of Texas, met with them in groups, and solicited their ideas for change and improvement. A few years later, when the College was celebrating its 125th anniversary, committees of constituents were formed to review and evaluate the various constituency activities and educational programs.

These short-term efforts related to OPENS and the 125th Anniversary have since developed into permanent, continuing parts of the constituency relationship. Now Austin College has four Constituency Advisory Committees — Alumni, Parents, Church, and Sherman Area — consisting of 15-20 members each. Each Committee meets yearly on campus to review efforts being made in the program area covered by the Committee and to make suggestions.

Program Services to the Constituency

Program services to the constituency are a challenge, for they can almost be never-ending. Yet a college has to focus most of its efforts and resources on its primary constituents — the students currently on campus.

One way Austin College balances the worthy but competing needs of current students and off-campus constituencies is to combine the two. Conferences, institutes, and special events are held on campus that involve both students and off-campus constituents. For example, each year the College has two different lecture series — the Cunningham Lectures and the Willson-Nichols Lectureship — addressed particularly to church professionals and laypersons. These lectures are also open to students and are used as integral parts of the student educational program. Similar involvement of both students and constituents can come through conferences and other special events in which faculty and students participate in efforts to acquaint the constituency with the most recent developments and perspectives in various fields of knowledge. These efforts can be especially addressed to those involved in changing careers.

Another program is continuing education. This adult education effort is directed primarily to service of individuals in the surrounding geographic area. Each term Austin College provides continuing education courses, lasting 6-10 weeks, in a variety of subjects.

Other conventional efforts are also made. These include mailings to the constituency about special issues, articles in the constituency magazine about the challenges facing higher education, and other similar activities.

Results of the New Emphasis

Austin College's comprehensive constituency program is one of the newest of its endeavors, and accordingly the impact it can have on the constituency and the benefit it can bring to the College are not yet fully known. Preliminary results are encouraging.

One result already clear is the need for adequate staff effort to support the constituency program. Careful coordination and planning are required to deal with large numbers of constituents and to relate them to the College and its programs. There is also a need to help faculty and others understand the reasons for and benefits of spending the College's financial resources on these efforts.

Principles Emerging from the Austin College Experience

Increased attention to constituencies seems essential for the continued effectiveness of institutions of higher educaiton. Traditional methods of reaching and utilizing constituencies need not be discarded but they need more discriminating attention. In Austin College's struggles these principles seem to have been validated.

1. *Mass appeal efforts to reach a conglomerate assembly of potential supporters must give way to a carefully pin-pointed approach to specific publics.*

Advertising and public relations firms have demonstrated the effectiveness of directing appeals to a specific segment of the public rather than to a "general public." The College must look outward to types of individuals who may reasonably be considered potential supporters, then these potential supporters will logically fall into distinctive categories. Increased effort then should be made to discover more about each of these publics, their interests, their needs, the most effective point of contact between individuals within the segment and the College.

2. *Increased effort needs to be made to carry the College to where the specific constituency is in addition to traditional occasions for bringing the constituency to the College.*

One regional office has already proved its worth to Austin College as a means of contact between the College and various constituencies. One or more additional regional offices may be contemplated. Other ways of bringing the College to the attention of local constituencies suggest themselves — traveling choral groups or orchestras or dramatic troupes; holding of seminars and conferences in urban centers; establishing centers of information about the College; and similar ventures. Most such enterprises have been undertaken in the past. What is suggested here is that a more systematic and carefully planned program be devised as a continuous operation.

3. *How to harness constituencies more effectively into services to the College demands careful study.*

As a basis for enlistment of dedicated support, the College needs detailed information about potential supporters: what are their interests? their talents? their educational desires?

The newly developed Advocates Program for Austin College illustrates the process of hand-picking specific individuals and seeking to get them committed into being spokespersons for the College. A second channel through which the college may utilize the talents and experience of potential supporters is through the service of advisory committees. At Austin College the Board of Church Visitors provides a channel for two-way communication between the College and the Presbyterian church membership. Advisory panels of strategic persons outside the college have been established to counsel with departmental or program teachers. Among the exes specialists in certain fields may be brought to the campus to interchange ideas with faculty and staff, such as a committee of doctors to advise with the pre-med advisers.

4. *New dimensions of constituency loyalty are stimulated by a variety of programs designed to utilize college resources as an aid to the constituents.*

Mid-career refresher courses or short-term workshops can provide a valuable service to former students or to community

supporters. Opening college events to invited publics enlarges the college's involvement with potential constituents. Co-operative programs with businesses or civic organizations stretches the impact of the college outward into society. Constituent relations becomes a two-way stream when answers are sought to the twin questions: What can the constituents do for the college? What can the college do for the constituents? Though much is already being done by colleges and universities in providing aids to the constituents, the future calls for a more carefully planned and systematic approach.

Chapter VII

The Austin College Design for Self-Renewal

The preceding chapters have dealt separately with the substance and processes of renewal as they bear upon specific divisions of a college: new roles and attitudes for students, the curriculum with courses and programs, new roles and attitudes for faculty and their professional development, techniques for governance and operations, and broadened constituency relationships. The unfolding changes at Austin, however, did not take place one at a time in separate compartments but rather emerged simultaneously with continuous interaction of cause and effect. A report by Austin College on the entire venture of change reflects the spirit of the enterprise in this introductory statement:

> This is a report of an unusual undertaking by a group of people who believe something fundamental is happening in higher education — something that is changing the educational task and is also changing the roles of student, faculty, and staff. They undertook to try to understand the changes in our society and the new demands on education and to devise a very practical response for a college, not in some faddish way, but in solid educational policies and programs. They attempted to put it all together at one point in time in a "do it yourself" (with a lot of help)

college self-renewal approach. This report is the story of that educational struggle . . .[1]

The "putting it all together" is the subject of this chapter. Here is described a *design for self-renewal,* a coherent approach for change of a college or university. The design described in this chapter is based on the Austin College experience. Other institutions will have their own unique situations and needs; but the concepts and ideas that proved successful at Austin College may be helpfully adapted elsewhere.

As Austin College struggled through a total institutional renewal over a decade, certain principles became evident as being pertinent to the creation of a design for continuous self-renewal of an educational institution.

— The rapidity of change in all aspects of modern life make it imperative that self-renewal in a college must be, not occasional, but continuous.

— To be effective such self-renewal must be built into the routine processes whereby the various divisions of the college function.

— Self-renewal proposals must be based upon and consistent with a clear understanding of the goals of the institution and an awareness of the concerns of students and faculty.

— Since self-renewal should encompass the total operation of the college, renewal mechanisms must function each year at three different levels — for the individual faculty member and staff member, for the program, and for the institution as a whole. This multi-level approach enhances the possibility for appropriate renewal because renewal, if blocked at one

[1]*Changing Tasks and Roles in Higher Education: A Total Institutional Project at Austin College,* (Sherman, Texas: Austin College, 1976) p. ii.

Austin College's Built-In Process For Continuous Change and Adaptation

I. For individuals in the faculty, administration, and staff

— The process of Career Development is a continuous process by which the individual projects plans for professional self-improvement consistent with his or her College duties, submitting proposals in writing annually after consultations with advisers. Implicit is the obligation of the College to support logical requests to the extent of available resources.

II. For the Program Unit (all the educational and operational functions of the institution are made a part of the Program Management Units)

— A requirement for each Program Unit is the annual evaluation of the current operation of the Unit, with proposals for the following year to strengthen or adapt the operation. The process calls for consideration by persons within the Unit, for observations from colleagues outside the unit, and — where desireable — for suggestions from outside consultants or constituents.

III. For the College

— The Governing Council, as a continuous function throughout each year, gives consideration to ideas and proposals of major nature arising from the functions described under I and II, consolidating changes and improvements into the total operation of the College or making appropriate recommendations to the Board of trustees.

— Every four years a *Planning Guide* is prepared for the whole College. This comprehensive document requires several months for preparation. It evaluates the various operations of the College over recent years, considers appropriate suggestions emerging from the functions in I, II, and III above, and makes projections for the coming four years.

level, can be stirred into life by renewal mechanisms at other levels.

The accompanying chart summarizes the built-in renewal processes at these three levels at Austin College.

The processes presented in the summary description of the chart are maintained in continuous operation like the movements of a well-coordinated machine or clock. A detailed description of each process follows.

Individual Renewal

The Career Development Program as described in Chapter IV is the key element in faculty self-renewal at Austin College.

The process is set in operation as each new faculty member joins the College whereby the new member is asked to consider his own professional goals against the background of the needs of his academic division and the goals of the College. Thereafter, the faculty member, in an informal and flexible manner, evaluates annually his or her progress toward stated goals, projects goals for the coming period, and prepares proposals for aid to achieving those goals which logically fall within the resources of the College and which would be of mutual benefit to the faculty member and to the College. Once every four years a more formal evaluation and projection of goals calls for discussions between the faculty member and his or her academic superiors. Implicit is the commitment of the College to make every effort to provide resources for the program. Informal conversations between faculty member and superiors on career development generally take place two or three times a year.

Program Renewal

As explained in Chapter V, the College has deviated from the customary academic divisions of departments and larger academic units to place all unified "grass roots" operations in

the structure of a "Program Unit." A Program Unit may be an academic department (History), an interdisciplinary collection of courses (History of Western Culture), or an operational unit (Admissions). Each Program Unit is under the supervision of a Director, who is supported by an Advisory Committee. The Director is responsible for submitting a report annually which evaluates the current operation and makes projections to improve or strengthen the operation. This report may be augmented by incorporating suggestions from the Advisory Committee, or such Committee suggestions may be submitted separately. Once every four years a long-range projection is made for the unit. Innovation is encouraged and resources are made available to the extent possible.

Institutional Renewal

Suggestions for changes, improvements, faculty advancements and enhanced training which flow from the Career Development Program and the stimulation of projections from the Program Units must be evaluated in the light of the whole institution, its purposes, its resources, its major thrusts into the future. Put together with ideas, suggestions, and proposals from the administrative levels, such challenges for advancement, when implemented, bring about institutional changes; and such changes should be logical parts of a whole.

At the internal level, the Governing Council and the College administration serve as two agencies for evaluating proposals for major changes as well as for introducing proposals for all-institutional innovation.

The innovative ideas flowing from the Program Units, when such proposals involve policy changes, or operations that cross Program Unit boundaries, or concepts whose implementation would require large funding or considerable additional equipment, are evaluated by the Governing Council, and recommendations passed along to the administration or the trustees. The process may be speedy at Austin College because there is no hierarchy of legislative bodies to be encountered in succession; rather the Governing Council is the College's only

legislative body.

A significant factor for insuring an all-college evaluation of operations in the College and of careful consideration of all proposals for change from an institutional point of view is the *Planning Guide*.

Once every four years the *Planning Guide* brings into focus the College's long-range planning for the coming four years. Under administrative assignment all facets of the College are drawn into a year-long preparation of the document. Reports from the Program Units for the preceding four years are examined, including needs for additional faculty and staff, facilities, equipment, program changes, and budgets. Task forces, committees, and faculty groups are brought into discussion of various aspects of the report. Under the supervision of the President's Office, the *Planning Guide* is prepared tentatively. Then follows a period of discussion by administration, trustees, and other appropriate groups. The approved *Planning Guide* establishes priorities for the coming period and becomes a guide for faculty, staff, and administration.

The process of preparing the *Planning Guide* is a careful one. It includes discussion sessions with divisional deans, the synthesizing of various planning documents into one, reviews by program directors and faculty, revisions, examination of draft material by faculty and students in an end-of-school College Workshop, presentation to the Governing Council for suggestions, and, finally, action by the Board of Trustees.

The purpose of the *Planning Guide* is to chart the course of the College for the next few years, with some longer-range projections as a framework. But the process of preparation, described above, also proves to be of significant value, as this statement about the 1977 *Planning Guide* illustrates:

> Involvement started at the grass roots level, the Program Unit, and that is where the ideas originated. There was interaction back and forth between Program Director and Divisional Executive and across divisions. Others outside the Program Management System participated and contributed ideas. A broad cross-section of the campus community helped in setting priorities and

considering budgets. The result is a cohesive, integral document that takes into account the needs of the various people and programs of Austin College but forges those needs into plans for *institutional* action . . .

A final factor is implied . . . that preparation was a learning process for all involved. This fact was attested to by some individuals who, in their response sheets, wrote that they appreciated being brought more into the crucial planning procedure and that their understanding of the College and the challenges it faces had grown considerably. During the last months and weeks (of discussion) attitudes changed, awareness increased about institutional problems and circumstances, and difficult complexities were perceived and taken into account . . . In essence, the *Planning Guide* process has been a self-renewal process, for people as well as for programs and the institution as a whole.[2]

The *Planning Guide* itself is probably the most tangible piece of institutional renewal efforts. With its statement of goals for the College every four years, the *Guide* sets in motion multiple renewal activities. Moreover, all those activities are framed within the institutional viewpoint, and thus the entire College not just one part of it, is moved forward.

Yet the *Planning Guide* is only part of a larger cycle, the four-year cycle of review of all College operations by the Board of Trustees (described in Chapter V). This cycle provides for Board review, over a four-year period, of the Development Program, the Business Affairs Program, the Educational Program, and the executive leadership and overall institutional planning with extension of the *Planning Guide*. Such a cycle stimulates regular planning, review of operations, and coordination — steps that can lead to renewal of the institution.

This kind of cycle of operation by the Board of Trustees illustrates the Board's nature. It is an active, working, involved

[2]*Report to the W. K. Kellogg Foundation*, prepared by Austin College Executives and Staff, 1977.

Board, and these attributes are important for self-renewal for the College. The Board must accept its responsibility for the institution if the College is to be future-oriented and self-renewing.

Further Aids to Stimulate Innovation

To this point the chapter has described the built-in processes for self-renewal which aim to make sure that innovation and adaptation continue to be a function of the required procedure. In addition the College has furnished some further aids to stimulate and help guide the direction of innovation.

Outside consultants: Consultants are brought to Austin College frequently to share ideas with faculty, program directors, and administrators. A continued working relationship has been maintained with some of these consultants.

Constituency Advisory Committees: Chapter VI describes the nature of these constituency committees. Primarily they serve to provide external relationships with parents, former students, donors, church leaders, and local community. Also, however, these committees can prove helpful in sharing ideas, impressions, and suggestions with internal program leaders. For example, a committee of former students who have become doctors may have helpful suggestions in reviewing the pre-medical program of the College.

Office of Educational Research and Development: This office was established to stimulate innovation and renewal throughout the educational program. It helps the faculty keep abreast of the latest creative thrusts in higher education by keeping up with trends in education and possibilities for financial support for research.

Office of Institutional Research: This office maintains statistics and similar data on the College's current position in relation to similar colleges, thus helping in the establishment of next year's priorities.

Leadership Chairs: The Ida M. and Cecil H. Green Chair of Creative Educational Leadership was established in 1977 to serve rotating appointments. The grant may be used for appointments of one, two, or more years to bring to the faculty a leader in

higher education to meet a particular current need of the College. The first two-year appointment came in recognition of the increasing importance of communication in modern life. Appointed to the position was a person with professional media experience and many years as Dean of a large school of Communication. His work was primarily with the faculty and administration. Through his leadership, efforts were made in the following directions: bringing media representatives to the campus, providing a two-way interchange between the student-faculty-college community and the world of the news media; encouraging faculty members to prepare articles which would share the innovative experiences at Austin College with college teachers and administrators elsewhere; helping integrate into established courses some understanding of the role of the communication factor in modern life; teaching communication subjects for special seminars during the January Term. In a similar way further appointments to the chair will be to permit development in a significant area of higher education which stands in need of critical attention either at Austin College or in higher education in general.

Similar chairs are being developed in other fields to be used for a similar purpose or to free some person on campas to delve in depth into a particular problem or project.

Center for Program and Institutional Renewal in Higher Education: Funded by grant money primarily, a new center in the service of institutions of higher education has been established at Austin College. The purpose of this center is to serve as a clearinghouse of information regarding renewal in institutions of higher education throughout the country. The work is just now getting under way. It is hoped that in time the clearinghouse will serve to disseminate a continuous flow of information about innovative experiences in higher education. Austin College, obviously, is in a strategic position to benefit from such information. The Center's primary activities involve sharing insights with others and cooperating together to advance new ideas in higher education, church policies related to higher education, and public policy affecting higher education.

The Annual Cycle of Renewal

How does the built-in process of renewal function during the school year? The following calendar of yearly activity may clarify procedures.

April-May: An annual report is required of each Program Unit to evaluate the current year's activities. This report also reviews the critical needs for the coming year and projects the resources essential to meet those needs.

Each Program Unit has a portfolio into which copies of these annual reports are filed and preserved, along with other working papers related to the Unit. To avoid unnecessary duplication, these portfolios are kept in a central administration file system and are available to all Program Directors and Division Executives and to others in the academic management. Through the office of the Director of Institutional Research this central file also makes available the institutional data on enrollment, faculty profile, course projections, retention rates, majors, and activities of graduates. Thus, over a period of years a data base is created for each Program Unit which proves useful in process analysis and projection.

May (Immediately after Commencement): The week-long College Workshop, with all faculty members and a representative set of students, reviews the past year's activity and makes detailed plans for the following fall.

June: The three-day Summer Workshop for all trustees reviews four-year activity in one major field of endeavor and makes long-range projections in that field.

Late August or early September: A short pre-school workshop is held to make final details in preparation for the fall term.

October: By this time accurate figures are at hand on fall enrollment, state of finances, and an evaluation of how projections for the current year are working out. Against this background, Program Directors with their Advisory Committees develop objectives for the following year with tentative estimates of budgetary needs. They spell out "critical concerns" and describe physical and equipment needs in order of priority.

December: Program Directors meet individually with the

Executive Vice-President and the Vice-President for Business Affairs to review projections on program and budget for the following year. These meetings generally concentrate on sharing information and ideas rather than on decision-making.

January: Division Executives meet to discuss priorities and to reconcile requests of individual Program Units for the coming year with the needs and resources of the College.

March: The Board of Trustees considers the tentative budget for the following year, as presented by the administration, and approves a final budget.

Four-Year Re-Evaluation and Future Projection: As indicated, each spring a two-part report is required of each Program Unit, looking at the current situation and making projections for the following year. In addition, however, the system provides that every four years this report is expanded to become a long-range report, giving a re-evaluation of the previous four-year operation of the Unit and projecting a long-range view of the future of the Unit. It is hoped that this alternating system will encourage hard-nosed analyses of continuing operation while giving freer rein to creative and imaginative projections of future possibilities. These long-range reports then become the bases for preparation of the *Planning Guide*.

Principles of a Design for Self-Renewal

Although the Austin College Design for Self-Renewal seems appropriate for that college, different approaches are certainly possible for other institutions. Some of the same principles, however, may be useful regardless of the particular design.

The principles are based on the fundamental assumption that the college or university knows its goals. The mission and role of the institution must be clearly perceived and self-renewal must take place within the framework of that vision and role. With that understanding, the following principles of renewal can be applied.

1. *Providing for renewal at different levels, with various efforts within each level, helps to assure self-renewal.*

Individual, program, institutional — each level can have its own set of renewal processes. This multi-level approach can cause unexpected progress and can also be a safety mechanism, for if one part of the renewal system does not function optimally, there are still other parts to spur renewal.

2. *Planning, goal-setting, and evaluation are key points throughout a self-renewal design.*

A design needs to provide for these processes at all levels — individual, program, and institutional. These techniques are essential tools in meaningful renewal. When these processes are built into regular operations and also considered at special times, such as the time of preparation of a long-range planning document, possibilities for renewal are multiplied.

3. *Consistent styles, particularly attention to process, throughout an institution are advantageous.*

For example, an educational program that emphasizes process as well as product for the student will reinforce a faculty development program that has a similar emphasis, and vice versa. Moreover, emphasis on process, on learning how to approach any problem rather than seeking just one answer to a particular problem, is a firm ground for renewal.

4. *Stimulation for renewal should come from both inside and outside the institution.*

Relying on just one or the other source may be risky. More meaningful results are probable when there is both inside stimulation, such as through an office of educational research and development, and outside stimulation, such as through constituency involvements and the use of consultants.

5. *An institution is basically people, many different people, and all must be involved and dealt with in terms of needs, attitudes, and perceptions.*

A college or university truly concerned with continuous renewal needs all the help it can get, all the insights of those connected to it, but it also faces the effects of change on the people involved. Such effects can be painful, particularly if the persons feel forced into change. The key is to provide broad-based participation and involvement, for the sake of both the institution and persons. The participation and involvement must be meaningful — it must recognize individual differences and needs, such as through a professional development program. Constant interaction, whether between mentor and student or faculty member and career advisor, is an important human element. Pain may still be present, but at least it will occur in a supportive environment.

6. *A cooperative, "how-do-we" approach is basic.*

To forge ahead, to strike out for the better program or institution, the mutual concerns of all involved in the common enterprise must be valued. From roles in classrooms with emphasis on faculty and students learning together, to career development with faculty and institution working together on mutual needs and supporting one another, to governance and operations with all trying to figure out what is best for the college, to programs relating the constituency to the college with emphasis on service to one another — through all activities and ventures a sense of mutuality and cooperation is most helpful.

The result of implementing such principles of self-renewal can be the building of a strong, positive climate on a campus. That climate can be one of openness to new ideas, of creativity, of struggle to do a better job. Such a climate is easy to identify as a worthy goal, but a specific design for self-renewal may be required to achieve it.

A Design for Self-Renewal can be a college's key to the unknown future. By providing structures and processes to accommodate ever-changing developments and situations, the design offers the means for any institution to meet the future, regardless of what the specific issues will be. The College will thus continue on the educational frontier in the years ahead.